

INSIDE TODAY WORLD NEWS

TEMPLE STAMPEDE



A man comforts an unidentified woman who breaks down after a stampede at a temple in Kunda, 112 miles southeast of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh state, India, Thursday, March 4, 2010. Scores of people have been killed and dozens others injured in a stampede that broke out Thursday as thousands of people jostled each other to get free clothes and utensils being distributed during a religious function at a temple in north India, officials said.

Read more on Page A8

SPORTS NEWS

LANCE'S LOT



Radioshack's Lance Armstrong of the U.S., right, rides during the second stage of the Vuelta a Murcia cycling tour between Calasparra and Caravaca de la Cruz, Murcia, Spain, Thursday, March 4, 2010.

Read more on Page 13

Price of a barrel of petroleum
US\$ 80.21
↓ 0.66

House passes jobs bill despite doubts

By ANDREW TAYLOR
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON—Despite doubts among many lawmakers that it will create many jobs, the House on Thursday passed legislation giving companies that hire the jobless a temporary payroll tax break. The measure passed 217-201 on a mostly party-line vote. The bill also extends federal highway programs through the end of the year.

Some Democrats feel the approximately \$35 billion jobs bill is too puny, while others say the tax cut for new hires won't generate many new jobs. However, the pressure is on to address jobs and deliver a badly needed win for President Barack Obama and a Democratic Party struggling in opinion polls and facing major losses in the upcoming midterm elections. Further jobs measures are promised.

Continued on Page 4



Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., left, and Senate Finance Committee Chairman Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., take part in a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, March 4, 2010, to discuss the Senate Jobs Bill.

Associated Press

Iraq early voting shattered by string of deadly blasts

REBECCA SANTANA
Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD (AP) — A string of deadly blasts shattered an early round of voting in Iraq Thursday, killing 17 people and highlighting the fragile nature of the country's security gains ahead of crucial parliamentary elections this Sunday.

Iraq security forces were out in full force, trying to protect early voters in an election that will determine who will lead the country through the crucial period of the U.S. troop drawdown and help decide whether the country can overcome its deep sectarian divisions.

But three explosions — a rocket attack and two suicide bombings — showed the ability of insurgents to carry out bloody attacks. They have promised to disrupt the voting with violence.

"Terrorists wanted to hamper the elections, thus they started to



Iraqi security forces secure the scene where a blast killed seven people in the Hurriya neighborhood about 500 yards from a polling station, in Baghdad, Iraq, Thursday, March 4, 2010. A string of blasts across the capital killed 17 people Thursday, authorities said, ratcheting up fear in an already tense city as many Iraqis cast early ballots ahead of Sunday's nationwide parliamentary elections.

Associated Press

blow themselves up in the streets," said Deputy Interior Minister Ayden Khalid Qader, responsible for election-related security across the country.

Continued on Page 6

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House leaders push for health vote by end of March



Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nev., center, flanked by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of Calif., left, and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer of Md., right, speaks with reporters outside the White House in Washington, Thursday, Feb. 25, 2010, at the end of a day of meetings with President Barack Obama at Blair House on health care reform.

Associated Press

ERICA WERNER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Democratic leaders are pushing to finish far-reaching U.S. health legislation and hold a climactic vote in the next three weeks, aiming to

overcome reluctance from the rank-and-file lawmakers while answering President Barack Obama's challenge for swift action.

House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer said Thursday that Democrats would like to get a

final vote by Congress' Easter break, which begins March 29. But Hoyer also said "the world doesn't fall apart" if that timeline is not met — a nod to the many missed deadlines that have characterized the health overhaul effort so far. c House Democratic leaders are pushing for a final vote on the legislation in the next three weeks, aiming to answer Obama's call for swift action. Democratic leaders are contending with a host of undecided lawmakers who want to see the fine print before making a decision. Hoyer said final language and a cost estimate should come back from the impartial Congressional Budget Office by the end of next week.

"At this point in time we don't have a bill," Hoyer said. "It's a little difficult to count votes if you don't have a bill."

Separately, more than a dozen House Democrats had a meeting scheduled on the issue with Obama at the White House Thursday. Among the group were lawmakers who voted against the legislation last year. Obama is leaving for

an Asia trip March 18 and the White House would ideally like to see action before then, something Hoyer said was "doable," while noting the bill still hasn't been completed.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, said Thursday, "I feel very confident about how we go forward."

At its core, the legislation still is largely along the lines Obama has long sought. It would extend coverage to tens of millions of uninsured Americans while cracking down on insurance company practices such as denying policies on the basis of pre-existing medical conditions. An insurance exchange would be created in which private companies could sell policies to consumers.

Obama's proposal included some ideas favored by Republicans, although the Democratic president has little hope of winning over even a single Republican lawmaker. Republicans have demanded that he discard his proposals and start working with them on a new one.

The White House hopes that by including elements of

Republican plans, Obama can win over Democratic lawmakers from conservative districts whose re-election hopes in November could be jeopardized by voting for the bill. If he can generate stronger Democratic support, congressional leaders can use parliamentary maneuvers to bypass Republican objections.

Much of the cost of the legislation, nearly \$1 trillion over a decade, would be financed by cuts in future government health care payments and higher payroll taxes on individuals earning more than \$200,000 and couples more than \$250,000.

In his latest changes Obama added some Republican ideas raised at last week's bipartisan summit, including renewed efforts on changes in medical malpractice and rooting out waste and fraud from the system.

The House passed health overhaul legislation by a narrow 220-215 vote in November and since then several Democrats have defected or left the House. To avoid Republican procedural delays in the Senate that Democrats cannot defeat, Obama is now pushing the House to approve the Senate's version of the bill, along with a package of changes to fix elements of the Senate bill that House Democrats do not like, including a tax on high-value insurance plans opposed by organized labor, a core Democratic constituency.

Obama made a closing argument for action Wednesday, saying, "I believe the United States Congress owes the American people a final vote."

The legislative maneuvering ahead is tricky and Democratic leaders are facing a groundswell of discontent from lawmakers who have taken a political beating over the past year of corrosive debate. As many as a dozen anti-abortion Democrats are threatening to defect because of the Senate bill's more permissive language on federal funding of the procedure. □

House tax-writing panel has new chairman

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats decided Thursday they wanted a consensus builder rather than a firebrand as chairman of the House of Representatives' powerful tax-writing Ways and Means Committee going into the November elections.

They chose Sander Levin, a liberal, to replace Charles Rangel, who stepped aside Wednesday while the House ethics committee continues to investigate his fundraising activities and finances after concluding last week that he violated House rules that forbid lawmakers from taking trips paid by corporate sponsors. The decision by Rangel was another jarring setback for President Barack Obama and majority Democrats in Congress. The Rangel affair comes at a time when the party is scrambling to save sweeping health care overhaul legislation that has been pending in Congress for well over a year and still assessing a surging anti-incumbent fervor among the voters.

Democratic incumbents facing tough election races do not want to fend off a Republican campaign focusing on Rangel's ethical cloud, especially after the leader of the House, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, had promised to drain the swamp of ethical problems that plagued Republicans when they ran the House. Rep. Fortney "Pete" Stark was next in line for the Rangel's post and held it for one day, until Democrats decided they did not want one of their most confrontational members — Stark once accused Republicans of wanting to send troops to Iraq "to get their heads blown off for the amusement of the president" — in such a high-profile job when their party already is under assault from voters.

The Ways and Means Committee arguably is the most powerful and influential in Congress. It originates all tax laws and has jurisdiction over trade, government pensions and benefit



In this Aug. 6, 2007 file photo, Rep. Sander Levin, D-Mich., left, listens as Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., speaks in Lima, Peru. Levin will take over as acting chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee replacing Rangel.

Associated Press

programs that pay about half the cost of Americans' health care.

In choosing Levin, Democrats went with a soft-spoken leader who Democrats hope will help move them past Rangel's ethics problems and provide a steady hand as Congress tries to pass a health care bill this month.

Once health care is dealt with, Levin will have to turn his attention to billions of dollars in tax cuts set to expire at the end of the year. That complex issue will only get more complicated and politically charged as congressional elections approach in November. □

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Army chief sees 'anxiety' on lifting ban on gays

DAN ELLIOTT

Associated Press Writer

FORT CARSON, Colorado (AP) — Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey said Thursday he sees anxiety in the armed services over how possible changes in the law that bans openly gay servicemen and women would be implemented.

The military must look hard at how a new policy would be put into force to alleviate those concerns, Casey said during a visit to Fort Carson, where he met with commanders and troops from two brigades preparing to deploy, one to Iraq and one to Afghanistan.

President Barack Obama wants to change the 1993 law known as "don't ask, don't tell," saying it unfairly punishes people who want to serve.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates has ordered a comprehensive study on how to lift the ban without hurting the forces.

In testimony before Congress last week, Casey and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz said they had serious concerns about lifting the ban with two wars raging.

Casey raised those concerns again Thursday, saying it's important to have accurate data on how soldiers and their families feel about lifting the ban and implementing a new policy. "We've all kind of gone around and done our own informal polling, but that's not sufficient to make a judgment of this level while we're in the middle of a war," he said.

He said it's important to give everyone in the armed forces the chance to speak up without fear of retribution. □

Gunman wounds 2 officers at Pentagon metro station

By CHRISTINE SIMMONS

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — A gunman opened fire at the teeming subway entrance to Pentagon complex Thursday evening, wounding two military police officers before being shot, a spokesman said. Authorities said all three were taken to a hospital. Chris Layman, a spokesman for the Pentagon Force Protection Agency, said the two officers and gunman were not thought to have life-threatening injuries although the suspect's wounds were more serious.

The suspect walked up to the entrance at 6:40 p.m. and opened fire. He hit two officers. The officers fired back, and the suspect was struck. The rush-hour

assault happened outside a massively fortified building that nevertheless is near busy crowds of transit riders.

The subway station is immediately adjacent to the Pentagon building. Since a redesign following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attack on the Pentagon, riders can no longer disembark directly into the building. Riders take a long escalator ride to the surface from the underground station, then pass through a security check outside the doors of the building, where further security awaits.

In the immediate aftermath, all Pentagon entrances were secured, then all were reopened except one from the subway, said Pentagon spokesman Bryan

Whitman.

A Pentagon official working late in the building said people inside first heard of the shooting on television. They were later told the building was locked down and to stay in place. The huge five-sided building is crisscrossed by 10 main corridors.

Then at around 7:30 p.m., they heard an announcement on the public address system that they could leave through Corridor 3 — one widely used to get access to one of the parking lots.

"We really don't know anything, just that we can leave now through that corridor," one official said on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak about the incident. □



Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey speaks to the media at Fort Carson in Colorado Springs, Colo., Thursday, March 4, 2010.

Associated Press

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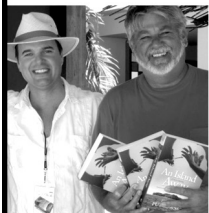
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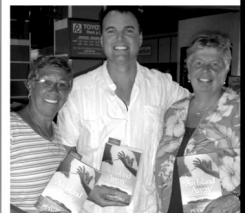
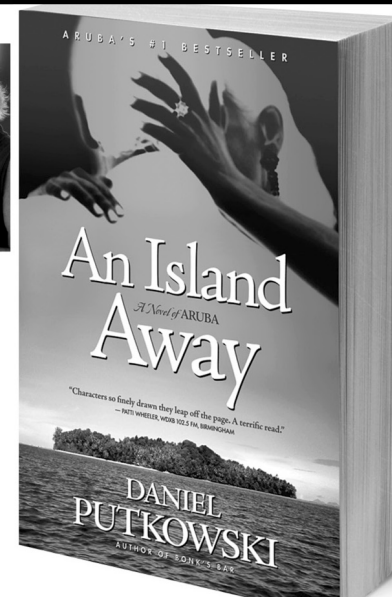
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JOBS BILL

Continued from Front Page

"If that's the only thing that I can vote on ... I'll vote for it, obviously," said Rep. Bill Pascrell, D-N.J. "We've got to get something moving. We've got to get something done." "It's really not a jobs bill," said Rep. Barbara Lee, D-Calif. "It's one small piece."

Lee said she instead wants money in the legislation for job training and youth summer jobs.

Thirty-five Democrats, mostly members of the Congressional Black Caucus, opposed the bill. Six Republicans voted in favor.

The House had passed a much larger measure in December



Nichole Grant of Chicago, holds onto an employment guide tabloid while attending a job fair Thursday, Feb. 25, 2010, in Chicago. New claims for unemployment benefits jumped unexpectedly in the U.S. last week, mostly because state agencies processed a backlog of claims caused by snowstorms the previous week.

Associated Press

that contained almost \$50 billion in infrastructure funding, \$50 billion in help for cash-starved state governments, and a six-month extension of jobless aid. That bill conspicuously left out the proposals to award tax credits for hiring new workers. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was among those skeptical of that idea.

The Senate responded last week with the far smaller measure that the House is reluctantly accepting. The House amended the measure Thursday to conform with so-called pay-as-you-go budget rules that have become an article of faith among moderate Democrats. The rules require future spending increases or tax cuts to be paid for with either cuts to other programs or equivalent tax increases. The minor tweak means that the notoriously balky Senate would have to act again before Obama could sign the bill into law.

The \$35 billion bill — blending \$15 billion in tax cuts and subsidies for

infrastructure bonds issued by local governments with the \$20 billion in transportation money — is far smaller than the massive economic stimulus bill enacted a year ago.

The jobs bill has been a source of tension between House and Senate Democrats.

"It's ridiculous that it's taken so long for the Senate to overcome indifference and obstruction to finally send a bill back to the House which represents just a fraction of what we need to do to help the unemployed," said House Appropriations Committee Chairman David Obey, D-Wis. "But better late than never, and better something than nothing."

Across the Capitol, the Senate is debating a far more costly measure to clean up a lot of unfinished business from last year. The \$100 billion-plus bill would extend unemployment assistance, revive a bevy of expired tax breaks, help states with soaring Medicaid costs and prevent doctors from having to absorb big cuts in Medicare payments.

The popular initiatives are traditionally extended on a bipartisan basis for brief periods of time, which hides their long-term costs.

The Senate plans to act on the jobs bill after wrapping up the unfinished-business bill, which means it probably won't be sent to Obama until next week.

The jobs bill contains two major provisions. First, it would exempt businesses hiring the unemployed from the 6.2 percent Social Security payroll tax through December and give them an additional \$1,000 credit if new workers stay on the job a full year. The Social Security trust fund would be reimbursed for the lost revenue.

Second, it would extend highway and mass transit programs through the end of the year and pump in \$20 billion in time for the spring construction season. The money would make up for lower-than-expected gasoline tax revenues.

Small businesses would continue to be able to write off equipment purchases as a business expense. Much of the bill is financed by cracking down on offshore tax havens. Several lawmakers in both parties criticized the payroll tax break, saying that it wouldn't do much to create jobs and that the bulk of it would go to employers for new hires that would be made anyway.

"It simply encourages conduct that would occur anyway," said Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas. Rep. Steve LaTourette, R-Ohio, said he asked businessmen at town meetings in his Rust Belt district whether they would hire people based on the payroll tax holiday. □

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Sex offender in teen's killing eluded suspicion

By ELLIOT SPAGAT and DON THOMPSON

Associated Press Writer
SAN DIEGO—When 17-year-old Chelsea King disappeared in a park last week, authorities checked photographs of sex offenders registered in the San Diego area. John Albert Gardner III was not among them.

When a 16-year-old girl was attacked last year in Riverside County, authorities did a similar check of the sex offender registry. Again, Gardner was not among them.

In both investigations, Gardner eluded detection because he was registered as a sex offender in different counties.

As authorities search for Gardner's possible links to other cases, his trail highlights how sex offenders in California manage to avoid suspicion even under a system designed to keep close tabs on the state's most dangerous predators.

"Obviously there's loopholes and he seems to have found them, either by design or by happenstance," said Marc Klaas, who founded Klaaskids Foundation after his 12-year-old daughter Polly was abducted from a slumber party in 1993 and later found slain. Gardner has attracted national attention ever since he was arrested in the rape and killing of King, a 17-year-old straight-A student whose body was believed to have been found in a shallow lakeside grave Tuesday.

Gardner, 30, is being held without bail after pleading not guilty Wednesday to Chelsea's murder and to attempted rape of another woman in December, a potential death penalty case. His public defender, Michael Popkins, did not address reporters after the arraignment.

Escondido police are also investigating if Gardner is tied to the disappearance of Amber Dubois, a 14-year-old who vanished a year ago while walking to school and

carrying a \$200 check to buy a pet lamb.

No suspects have ever been publicly identified.

"This has definitely got our attention," said Lt. Craig Carter. Gardner was registered as a sex offender because of his 2000 conviction for molesting a girl after luring her to his

house with the Robin Williams movie "Patch Adams," about a doctor who uses humor to treat patients. He served five years of a six-year sentence, though his plea agreement allowed for nearly 11 years and a court-appointed psychiatrist urged "the maximum sentence allowed by law." □



John Albert Gardner III is escorted by sheriff deputies as he glances toward the judge at an arraignment where he pleaded not guilty to murder and other charges in the case involving teenager Chelsea King in a San Diego Superior Courtroom Wednesday March 3, 2010 in San Diego.

Associated Press

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An Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) worker carries a ballot box into a school where security forces will cast their votes on Thursday, in Najaf, Iraq, Wednesday, March 3, 2010. Iraqis are due to go to the polls March 7 for the national elections, with early voting by special groups such as security forces, hospital staff, and prisoners taking place March 4.

Associated Press

DEADLY BLASTS

Continued from Front Page

Thursday's voting was for those who might not be able to get to the polls Sunday. The vast majority of early voters were the Iraqi police and military who will be working election day — when the rest of the country votes — to enforce security. Others voting included detainees, hospital patients and medical workers. Many of the blast victims were believed to be security personnel, targeted by suicide bombers who hit police and

soldiers lined up to vote.

Convoys of army trucks and minibuses ferried soldiers and security personnel to and from polling stations. Many stores were shuttered, and normally crowded streets were nearly empty, as people stayed home on a holiday declared by the government.

About 19 million of Iraq's estimated 28 million people are eligible to vote in the elections, and Iraqi expatriates can cast ballots in 16 countries around the world.

In the first attack, a Katyusha

rocket killed seven people in the Hurriyah neighborhood about 500 yards from a closed polling station, police said.

The second attack hit the upscale Mansour neighborhood, where a suicide bomber detonated an explosive vest near a group of soldiers lining up at a polling station, killing six and wounding 18, police said.

The blast left a small crater in the middle of the street, and debris from the explosion splattered around the crater. Pools of blood and burnt human flesh littered the ground along with broken glass, rubble from buildings and the remnants of shops signs.

In the third blast, another suicide bomber blew himself up near policemen waiting to vote in the Bab al-Muadham neighborhood in central Baghdad, killing four people and wounding 14 others, according to police and hospital officials.

All the officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Sunday's elections are only Iraq's second for a full parliamentary term since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion ousted Saddam Hussein, leading to the eventual creation of the Shiite-dominated government in power today, headed by Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

At a high school in Baghdad's Karradah neighborhood, police and military officers crowded into the building to cast their ballots, displaying the now-iconic purple ink — used to prevent people from voting twice — on their fingers.

Many expressed frustration at the government and a desire for change. That was echoed in the northern city of Mosul, where Mohammed Ali Hassan said he voted for the list headed by (former premier Ayad) Allawi, "... because I hope for change, and the people on the list are capable of change."

In the Christian town of Qara Qosh in the northern Ninevah province, a line of blue-uniformed Iraqi police officers snaked out the door of a middle school by midmorning, waiting to vote. □



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Clinton urges recognition of Honduras government

MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press Writer

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Thursday the Obama administration will resume aid to Honduras that was suspended after a coup last year and urged Latin American nations to recognize the new Honduran government. Clinton said the Honduran government that took office in January was democratically elected, was reconciling the population split by last June's coup and deserved normal relations with countries that cut ties after the ouster of the former president.

"We think that Honduras has taken important and necessary steps that deserve the recognition and the normalization of relations," she told a news conference on the sidelines of a meeting of regional officials in Costa Rica.

Clinton praised steps taken by new Honduran President Porfirio Lobo, whose election in November began the resolution of the political crisis caused by the ouster of his predecessor, Manuel Zelaya. Zelaya, a leftist populist, was toppled while pushing a constitutional amendment that would have allowed him to run for re-election.

Clinton said she had notified Congress that more than \$31 million in U.S. assistance suspended after the coup would be restored. She also said it was time for Honduras to be readmitted to the Organization of American States.

Clinton will attend a meeting of Central American leaders, including Lobo, in Guatemala on Friday at which Honduras will be the main topic. Clinton has been making the case for Honduras at each stop on her current six-nation tour of Latin America.

Some countries she has visited — notably Argentina and Brazil — are balking at restoring ties with Honduras. They wanted



Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, right, tries on a bracelet made by small business owner Jewelry Designer Diana Matinez, left, from Tegucigalpa, Honduras, as she attends the Third Ministerial Meeting in San Jose, Costa Rica, Thursday, March 4, 2010.

Associated Press

Zelaya restored to power and believe recognition would reward the coup leaders who ran an interim government until January.

Clinton said she disagreed with such delays.

"I don't know what they are waiting for, but that is their right to wait," she said. "We believe that President Lobo and his administration have taken the steps necessary to restore democracy." □



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HIGHLIGHTS of Consolidated Financial Position MADURO & CURIEL'S BANK NV

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The financial highlights in amounts (NAf.) representing fifteen local and international companies

	2009	2008
Total Assets	5,843,210,000	5,425,111,000
Total Customers' Deposits	5,117,338,000	4,705,540,000
Total Loans and Advances	3,173,009,000	3,026,141,000
Capital Funds/Shareholders' Equity	491,182,000	444,324,000
Net result after tax	119,136,000	144,853,000

The financial highlights in percentages (%)

Growth in Total Assets	7.7%
Growth in Total Customers' Deposits	8.8%
Growth in Loans and Advances	4.9%
Decline in Net Profit, excl. Investment revenue	(5.5%)

Other key data of the MCB Group

	2009	2008
Staff	1469	1471
Offices	50	47
Bankomatiko ATMs	145	143
POS Terminals	6,345	5,735
Client accounts	548,504	534,926

INCOME STATEMENT

- The income presented in our financial statements represents the total income for all 15 companies operating onshore and international businesses based in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. International business activities are a major contributor to the Group's consolidated income.
- The MCB Group made a profit of f. 119.1 million after taxes. In 2008, the MCB Group's results in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba benefited from large gains from investment securities which did not re-occur to that extent in 2009.
- Excluding the proceeds of investment securities in both 2009 and 2008, MCB's net profit after taxes declined by app. 5.5%. This decline was caused almost entirely by events taking place outside of our borders, and the performance of the Group on our own markets was satisfying.
- From the MCB Group's total net interest and operating income, 39% went to paying personnel expenses, 24% to paying other operating expenses, 9% to paying taxes, 1% to strengthening our reserve for banking risks, and a healthy 27% to Retained Earnings.

BALANCE SHEET AND EQUITY

- MCB Group's consolidated total assets at the end of December 2009 totaled f. 5,843 million for an increase of 7.7%.
- The total of loans and advances to customers increased by 4.9% compared to 2008. Loans to retail clients increased by 10.7%. Commercial lending showed a marginal 1.4% growth due principally to weaknesses in the economies of St. Maarten and Aruba. The growth of retail

loans was especially satisfying and led to an increase in market share in this segment in mortgage and consumer lending.

- Our clients continued to place their confidence in our banks as customers' deposits increased by 8.8%. Retail customers increased their deposits by almost 5.8% while corporate customers' deposits went up 8.6%.
- At the end of December 2009, MCB Group's Shareholders' Equity had increased by almost f. 50 million to end the year at f. 491 million. MCB has a strong capital base and is well positioned for future growth and for continued support to our societies and economies, also in the current worldwide economic downturn.

LOANS

- In 2009, MCB extended over 5500 new personal and car loans and almost 400 new residential mortgages in Curacao alone.
- MCB in Curaçao also extended almost 500 new small business loans and 125 new Granito micro-finance loans.

TAXES

- The MCB Group's profit tax-obligation resulting from its operations in 2009 is f. 38 million; it also paid f. 3 million in turnover tax last year. During this same period, its employees paid wage taxes of f. 29 million.
- MCB in the Netherlands Antilles collected f. 45 million in license fees in 2009. In Aruba, our Caribbean Mercantile Bank collected AWG. 10 million in exchange tax.

EMPLOYMENT

- MCB Group employed 1469 persons in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba at the

end of 2009.

- During the year, MCB Group paid its employees total salaries and employee benefits amounting to f. 171 million.

COMMUNITY

- MCB Group again gave over 4500 donations representing f. 2.3 million to neighborhood, religious and sports organizations, to institutions benefiting the youth of our islands, and to relieving the often devastating effects of poverty.
- Not included in these monetary figures is the assistance given by the 352 volunteers among our staff on all islands, who assist the young and the elderly, the sick and the recovering addict, in schools and in homes for the aged.
- One of the aspects that makes the future of these islands especially exciting are the many young and energetic professionals that we see on their way to becoming the leaders of the future in all sectors of our societies. It is in that light that we dedicate our 2009 Annual Report to young professionals on all of the Dutch Caribbean islands – and in our Banks.

2009 was one of the most challenging years in our Bank's 93 year history. What made it especially challenging is that much of what we were confronted with were events happening well beyond our influence, control and even our borders. We are grateful that we were able to continue to count on the confidence and trust of our clients and our community, and of our shareholders and directors and our employees, to whom go also our warm gratitude for their support in the past year.

For the full Consolidated Financial Highlights for the financial years 2009 and 2008, the Explanatory Notes to the Consolidated Financial Highlights, and the Auditors' Report thereto from KPMG Accountants B.V., please write to Annual Report 2009, P.O. Box 305, Curaçao, N.A. for a free copy of our 2009 Annual Report or visit our website www.mcb-bank.com.

63 die, dozens injured in Indian temple stampede



Women looking for missing relatives scan sandals after a stampede at a temple in Kunda, 112 miles southeast of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh state, India, Thursday, March 4, 2010. Scores of people were killed and dozens of others injured in the stampede that broke out Thursday as thousands of people jostled each other to get free clothes and utensils being distributed during a religious function at the temple in north India, officials said.

Associated Press

RAJESH KUMAR SINGH
Associated Press Writer

KUNDA, India (AP) — A stampede among thousands

of poor villagers scrambling for free food and clothes at a commemorative event killed 63 people Thursday at a Hindu temple in northern India and injured dozens of others.

Nearly all the victims were women and children. The stampede was so intense it knocked down a gate at the compound surrounding the temple in the small town of Kunda, on the northern plains of Uttar Pradesh state.

“How could this happen in such a holy place?” cried Phool Chand Saroj, a 48-year-old farmer whose wife, daughter and grandmother were killed in the stampede. “If they had been more

careful about letting in the crowds this would not have happened.”

While most men in the farming region worked in their fields, women from surrounding villages gathered with their children Thursday in Kunda for a midday handout of donations, an anniversary event marking the death of the wife of local religious leader Kripalu Maharaj. Giving food and other alms to the poor on death anniversaries is a common Hindu tradition.

The crush of people turned into a stampede that killed 63 and injured 44, government official Ashok Kumar said.

Hours after the tragedy, piles of unclaimed shoes sat inside the compound where victims had placed them before entering the temple. The compound in Kunda, some 110 miles southeast of the state capital of Lucknow, appeared to have been undergoing renovations. Bamboo and iron rods used in construction were strewn about the grounds, possibly causing some people to trip.

By late afternoon police had cleared the compound and taken all the bodies to an adjacent hospital, run by the temple, for identification and autopsies, said police official K.G. Khan. Outside, villagers wailed in anguish upon receiving word that their loved ones had perished.

Gudal, a 38-year-old farmer who uses only one name, wept over the death of her 7-year-old daughter, Ranjana. “She had just wandered in to see what was happening,” she said.

Deadly stampedes are a relatively common at temples in India, where large crowds — sometimes numbering hundreds of thousands — gather in tiny areas with no safety measures or crowd control. In 2008, more than 145 people died in a stampede at a remote Hindu temple at the foothills of the Himalayas.

The handout in Kunda is an annual tradition arranged by Maharaj and usually draws a few hundred people, but the event was announced more broadly this year and drew several thousand villagers, said state lawmaker Raghuraj Pratap Singh, who represents Kunda.

By Thursday evening, all the victims had been identified and police handed bodies over to relatives to carry back to home villages, Khan said. As bodies were claimed, temple officials at the hospital gave donations of 10,000 rupees (220 dollars) to families who lost relatives.

Police deployed an ambulance for Saroj, the farmer, to take the bodies of his three relatives on the 3-mile trip back to his village of Kazipur ahead of a cremation ceremony planned for Friday. □

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1,000 trapped on ferry stuck in Baltic Sea ice

KARL RITTER

Associated Press Writer

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Dozens of ships including a passenger ferry with nearly 1,000 people on board were trapped Friday in heavy pack ice in the Baltic Sea off Sweden's east coast, officials said.

Ice breakers were trying to free the ferry Amorella and two cargo ships stuck at the edge of an archipelago northeast of Stockholm, while rescue helicopters and military hovercraft were on standby to evacuate passengers if needed. Gale-force winds were hampering the effort, the Swedish Maritime Administration said.

"As soon as they break the ice, it freezes over again," sea rescue spokesman Peter Lindquist said. He said no one

was hurt and there were no immediate plans to evacuate the ships.

The Maritime Administration said the Amorella had 753 passengers and 190 crew on board.

The 10-deck ship belongs to Viking Line, which operates Baltic Sea cruises between Sweden and Finland.

The other ships stuck in the area were the roll-on-roll-off ferry Sea Wind with 32 people and the Regal Star, a cargo ship with 56 people on board. Three other ferries that got stuck in the ice were able to break free earlier Thursday.

One of those ships, the Finnfellow, collided lightly with the Amorella when the ice pressed the two ships together, but there was no major damage to either ship, Lindquist said. "Just some

paint that was scratched off," he said.

A total of about 50 ships were stuck in ice along Sweden's eastern seaboard, said Johny Lindvall, who manages the maritime administration's ice breaker service. Heavy ice cover is not uncommon further north, but the ice rarely gets thick enough in the Stockholm archipelago to trap powerful passenger ferries like the Amorella.

"There's no danger for the passengers as long as there's food and drink on board," Lindvall told The Associated Press.

Mats Nystrom, a passenger on the Amorella, told Swedish broadcaster SVT that there was no panic on the ship.

"The atmosphere is calm so there is no danger in that sense," said Nystrom, who



In this photo made from TV ships are seen trapped in ice in the Baltic Sea on Thursday, March 4, 2010. Sweden's sea rescue service says four passenger ferries with more than 1,000 people on board are trapped in ice in the Baltic Sea. The Swedish Maritime Administration says that there are 1,133 passengers and crew on the four ships, which have been stuck for hours just off the Swedish coast.

Associated Press

is a sports presenter for the network. He said the most dramatic event had been when the two ships touched.

"Suddenly in the loudspeakers there's a voice saying that all passengers must immediately move to the stern. Of course at that moment the passengers got worried and wondered what was happening," Nystrom said.

The maritime administration said the ships had ignored warnings about the icy conditions.

"Normally we can handle this type of obstacle," Viking Line CEO Jan Karstrom told SVT. "But in this case the wind is unfortunate. It's blowing toward land and it means that (the ice) is packed more and more against land." □



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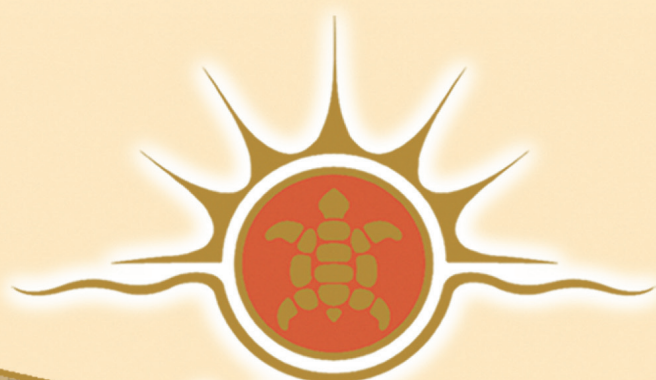
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A multitude of musical efforts for Haiti



FILE - In this Feb. 1, 2010 file photo provided by WATW, singers and celebrities, including Barbra Streisand, center, perform at the 'We Are The World 25 Years for Haiti' recording session held at Jim Henson Studios on Feb. 1, 2010 in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

(AP Photo/WATW, Kevin Mazur, file)

By **NEKESA MUMBI MOODY**,

AP Music Writer

NEW YORK — When Kirk Franklin saw the devastation caused by the earthquake in

Haiti, he immediately reacted — through song. In a matter of days, the Grammy-winning gospel star enlisted some of the genre's top stars to record a charity single to help with

relief efforts.

"You want to respond based on what it is you know to do," he said of "Are You Listening," recorded by more than two dozen artists under the moniker Artists United for Haiti.

They were hardly the only ones. Since the Jan. 12 earthquake, there has been a flood of musical odes and projects for Haiti. While other tragedies have inspired telethons, concerts and charity songs, it seems as if Haiti's misfortune has caused a musical overflow.

There's the all-star "We Are the World" remake that debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart (there is also a Spanish-language version with Latin stars); the Jay-Z, Bono, The Edge and Rihanna charity single, "Stranded (Mon Amour Haiti)"; the Simon Cowell-produced remake of "Everybody Hurts," featuring Susan Boyle, Mariah Carey, Michael Buble and others; the digital album "Download to Donate for Haiti," featuring unreleased tracks by Jack Johnson, the Dave Matthews Band and others, presented by the Linkin Park-led Music for Relief; the Nas and Damian Marley song "The Strong Will Continue"; and Eddie Vedder's

remake of "My City of Ruin." Retail store American Outfitters and Filter magazine have released a music CD for Haiti available in all American Eagle stores, and Jamaican artists — including Maxi Priest and Barrington Levy and Toots — have put out the single "Listen2theCall." There's also the "Hope for Haiti Now" CD, featuring music from the telethon, which was a top seller on iTunes; several songs from the telethon rose on the Billboard charts.

"I know there's a lot of people on it, but that's not a bad thing," said Quincy Jones of the musical efforts for Haiti. He orchestrated the first "We Are the World," session 25 years ago, and the latest rendition, which features Barbra Streisand, Lil Wayne, Miley Cyrus, Wyclef Jean and dozens of other music stars. "It's the kind of thing everybody should contribute to and let everything fall where it may," Jones said.

Among the songs available on Amazon.com is will.i.am's remix of The Who's "My Generation," featuring Slash. "The response has been very strong from the music community," said Kristin Smith, senior manager of digital music at Amazon,

comparing the artistic output to that seen after the tragedies of Katrina and 9/11. "It has been very generous in terms of what artists have done."

It's also come about very quickly. Linkin Park's Mike Shinoda managed to cobble an entire album of new material for the organization Music for Relief in a matter of days with help from other artists who donated tracks for the project. "It really showed that if you really want to do something and time is of the essence, the music industry can really mobilize and get something great together quickly," he said.

"That's a product of people's will to do it and it's a product of the technology that we've got at our fingertips."

David Saltzman, executive director of the Robin Hood Foundation and one of the advisers for the "Hope for Haiti Now" telethon, said there are more musical efforts today to help Haiti than for past tragedies because of how easy it is to record and share music.

"More artists who feel compelled to do something can get their music in the hands of people who are excited about purchasing it and saving lives," he said. □

BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY



A case worker discusses eligibility for unemployed people at a jobs center in San Francisco, California February 4, 2010.

REUTERS/Robert Galbraith

Economy showing strength as retail sales climb

By CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER,
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — The economy is showing renewed strength as retail sales surged last month and factory orders also increased. Yet there's little evidence such growth will lead to more hiring soon — unless recent gains in consumer spending force companies to add workers.

Retailers reported Thursday that sales rose in February by the largest amount since November 2007. And orders to U.S. factories in January posted their sharpest rise in four months. That was the best showing since September and another sign that manufacturing is helping drive the economic recovery.

Still, first-time claims for jobless benefits remain elevated. The Labor Department said initial claims for unemployment insurance fell by 29,000 to a seasonally adjusted 469,000 last week. But the drop only partly reverses a sharp rise in claims since the start of the year.

The four-week average of claims, which smooths out volatility, fell by 3,500 to 470,750. That's still far above the 425,000 level that economists say claims need to fall below to signal hiring. Initial jobless claims are considered a gauge of the pace of layoffs and an indication of companies' willingness to hire new workers. They have been volatile in recent weeks, because last month's severe snowstorms in the Eastern United States affected the data.

Claims rose sharply two weeks ago, partly because several states processed a backlog of claims that had built up from previous weeks when government offices closed due to bad weather. No states reported backlogs this week, a Labor Department analyst said.

"It might be another couple of weeks until we get a clear picture of where claims are settling in," said Conrad DeQuadros, an economist at RDQ Economics.

In a sign that companies are raising output without adding many jobs, the department said in a separate report that productivity rose by 6.9 percent in the fourth quarter. That exceeded analysts' expectations of a 6.3 percent rise.

Higher productivity, or output per hour worked, raises living standards in the long run. But it also lets companies get by with fewer workers.

A still-weak housing market is weighing on the recovery. □

Stocks falter after drop in pending home sales

By STEPHEN BERNARD
and TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK — Stocks clung to a tight range Thursday after an unexpected drop in pending home sales raised new concern about the economy.

Major indexes were little changed in afternoon trading following the National Association of Realtors' report that its index of home sales agreements fell 7.6 percent in January from December. Contracts fell to the lowest level since April.

The drop in the number of buyers of previously occupied homes dampened some of the enthusiasm about better retail sales numbers. Macy's Inc., Limited Brands Inc. and The Wet Seal Inc. all posted monthly sales that topped analysts' expectations. Wal-Mart Stores Inc. raised its dividend 11 percent. The drop in home sales brought back concerns about the economy after a stronger report on jobless benefits claims had raised hopes about the Labor Department's monthly payroll report due out Friday.

Initial jobless claims dipped last week after two straight weeks of unexpected increases, the Labor Department reported. New claims fell to 469,000, better than the 470,000 economists had forecast.

Friday's report is expected to show that unemployment rose to 9.8 percent in February from 9.7 percent in January as employers cut 50,000 jobs. However economists are also expecting slight gains in both average hourly earnings and average hours worked. The job market is often one of the last parts of the economy to recovery after a recession.



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, February 18, 2010.

REUTERS/Brendan McDermid

Daniel Penrod, senior industry analyst for the California Credit Union League in Ontario, Calif., said gains in employment are necessary to stabilize the economy and add to a sense that a recovery is occurring.

"It used to be that confidence led in to actual employment where I think the reverse is true now," he said. "The job market has been so severe nationally that people are really feeling the lumps."

In early afternoon trading, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 19.80, or 0.2 percent, to 10,416.56. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 1.22, or 0.1 percent, to 1,120.01, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 1.61, or 0.1 percent, to 2,282.29.

Advancing stocks narrowly outpaced those that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 446.4 million shares compared with 434.1 million shares traded at the same point Wednesday.

Bond prices were mixed. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, fell to 3.60 percent from 3.63

percent late Wednesday.

Stocks have barely budged over the past two days as investors look ahead to the monthly employment report, one of the most closely watched indicators on the economy. The Dow fell 9 points Wednesday, a day after rising two points.

Major indexes pulled back Wednesday afternoon when the Federal Reserve said the economic recovery would be slow. The Fed's beige book report, which measures economic activity on a regional basis, pointed to weak loan demand and a soft job market.

Crude oil fell 65 cents to \$80.22 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

The dollar mostly rose against other major currencies. Gold fell.

Among retailers, Macy's fell 2 cents to \$20.01, while Limited rose 24 cents, or 1.1 percent, to \$22.89. Wet Seal rose 19 cents, or 4.6 percent, to \$4.30. Wal-Mart rose 25 cents, or 0.5 percent, to \$53.91.

The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies rose 0.38, or 0.1 percent, to 649.64. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Green, Connell lead, upstart Rocha chases at Honda



TIM REYNOLDS

AP Sports Writer

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Florida (AP) — Alexandre Rocha nearly stopped playing golf last year, until two moves by the International Olympic Committee changed his mind.

And that's just one tiny part of his unbelievable story.

The world's 711th-ranked player — who needed to survive a pre-qualifier, then a Monday qualifier, then a playoff, just to get into the field at PGA National this week — shot a 4-under 66 on Thursday, one shot back of Nathan Green and Michael Connell after the first round on a windy and unseasonably cool first day at the Honda Classic.

"I needed a day like today like, you have no idea," Rocha said. "And it was for nobody. It's for myself."

The Honda is only his fourth PGA Tour event; the last was in 2003, and he's never made a cut. He lost his European Tour card last year and got status earlier this year on the Asian Tour, only after deciding that he wanted to continue playing golf for a living.

The IOC had much to do with that. First, they awarded the 2016 Summer Olympics to his native Brazil, then added golf to that program.

Rocha — who didn't know a word of English when he arrived at Mississippi State — took those moves as signs of what he was supposed to do, so he recommitted to the game with hopes of finally making something happen.

After three straight birdies to open Thursday's round, something was happening.

And plenty of luck was on his side, too. He pulled his drive into a row of houses on the seventh hole, got a fortunate bounce off something and made par. He knocked in 30-foot par-saving putts that he was just trying to get close, saying bogey was a good score. Somehow, he never lost composure.

"I am surprised at how calm, how relaxed and how confident I felt all day," Rocha said. "That surprises me. I am not surprised about the fact that I can play proper golf. I've been working at it, and hard."

And it has come out of me in the past before. I'm very satisfied with it, yes. Am I surprised to be in a good position on the leaderboard? Yes. But I wasn't shocked, you know, to see myself playing well."

Only two men did any better.

Green's card was mistake-free, five birdies, no bogeys, and a mere 25 putts.

Continued on Page 15

Accused doctor resigns from CFL's Toronto Argos

By ROB GILLIES

Associated Press Writer

TORONTO — A doctor accused of selling an unapproved drug has resigned as team doctor of the Canadian Football League's Toronto Argonauts.

Dr. Anthony Galea resigned in early February after working for the team since 2003, Argos spokeswoman Beth Waldman said Thursday. She said she doesn't know the reason for the Canadian doctor's resignation. "Dr. Galea resigned as our team doctor so we're no longer associated with him," Waldman said.

Galea is facing four charges in Canada related to the drug known as Actovegin. The drug is extracted from calf's blood and used for healing. Galea's assistant also has been charged in the U.S. for having HGH and

another drug while crossing the border in September.

Yankees star Alex Rodriguez and other high profile baseball players have been contacted by U.S. federal investigators regarding Galea. Rodriguez said Monday he was "aware" of the investigation and plans to cooperate with the government. He declined comment when asked if he has been treated by Galea.

Mets center fielder Carlos Beltran and shortstop Jose Reyes talked to federal investigators last week. Beltran said Galea worked with team doctors when he treated him. Galea is known for using a blood-spinning technique — platelet-rich plasma therapy — designed to speed recovery from injuries. Among the athletes he has treated are

golfer Tiger Woods, swimmer Dara Torres and several NFL players.

Galea was arrested Oct. 15 after a search warrant was executed at the Institute of Sports Medicine Health and Wellness Centre in Toronto. He is charged with selling Actovegin, conspiracy to import an unapproved drug, conspiracy to export a drug and smuggling goods into Canada. His lawyer, Brian H. Greenspan, has said his client denies any wrongdoing. Greenspan also has said Galea has used HGH himself and prescribed it to non-athlete patients over the age of 40 to improve their quality of life, but said he has never given it to athletes. The investigation into Galea began when his assistant, who often drove for the doctor, was stopped attempting to enter the



In this Dec. 16, 1999, file photo, Dr. Anthony Galea of the Institute of Sports Medicine in Toronto treats a patient with shock wave therapy. Dr. Galea resigned in early February from the Toronto Argonauts Canadian Football team after working for the team since 2003, a team spokeswoman said Thursday, March 4, 2010.

Associated Press

United States from Canada. Vials and ampules containing human growth hormone and Actovegin were found in a car driven by Mary Anne Catalano, according to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and U.S. federal court documents. A person familiar with the Galea investigation told the AP it was being led by Department

of Homeland Security, FBI and Food and Drug Administration agents out of Buffalo, N.Y., where Catalano was arrested Sept. 14, and that a grand jury could begin hearing testimony there within weeks.

The person, who was not authorized to release the information, spoke on condition of anonymity. □

Lance Armstrong feels physical demands of cycling

PAUL LOGOTHETIS

AP Sports Writer

CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ,
Spain (AP) —

Lance Armstrong is feeling the physical demands of his second year back in cycling.

The 38-year-old Armstrong said on Thursday he “suffered a little bit” at the start of the Vuelta of Murcia, his first race in five weeks. Nerves even came into play.

“It’s just the tempo,” he said. “It was a windy day, it’s nervous and at the end we’re doing 35-45 miles an hour, and you can’t simulate that in training. So you’re a little bit out of your element.”

Team RadioShack boss Johan Bruyneel said Armstrong, who moved up to 32nd from 46th after two stages, was “still a long way off from being in good shape right now.” “He’s a bit better than last year, but he’s different,” Bruyneel said. “Last year everything was new, we had

lost all of the references. The whole time we lived with doubt — doubt whether he would reach a certain level, how would that level be, what do we have to do. Now we know he can reach a competitive level.”

Armstrong said memories of last year’s crash in the first stage of the Vuelta of Castilla and Leon did not resurface even if it was his first trip back to Spain since the accident, which led to surgery on a broken collarbone.

“The key there is don’t be in the back,” the seven-time Tour de France champion said. “I was at the back and you get caught behind the crashes and stupid stuff happens.” Bruyneel attributed the crash to qualities one never would have associated with the American: “Uncertainty, doubts, not having the same reflexes as before — he had lost everything.” Armstrong

is making up for lost training time in Murcia, where Saturday’s 13.7-mile time trial will provide a big boost for his hopes of winning the Tour. Robert Hunter of Garmin-Transitions leads with an overall time of 8 hours, 35 minutes, 52 seconds. Armstrong is five seconds back. “We didn’t have time to focus on specific things,” Bruyneel said. “Last year was more general training without an idea of where it would go.”

RadioShack was coming together well and that was key to Armstrong’s chase for the Tour title, which used to be a guarantee. “Until 2005 we knew that if things went well — the preparation, if there were no crashes, no one got sick, no mechanical problems on the course and if the team worked well — we had certain guarantees to win the Tour,” Bruyneel said. “Now, that’s not the case.”

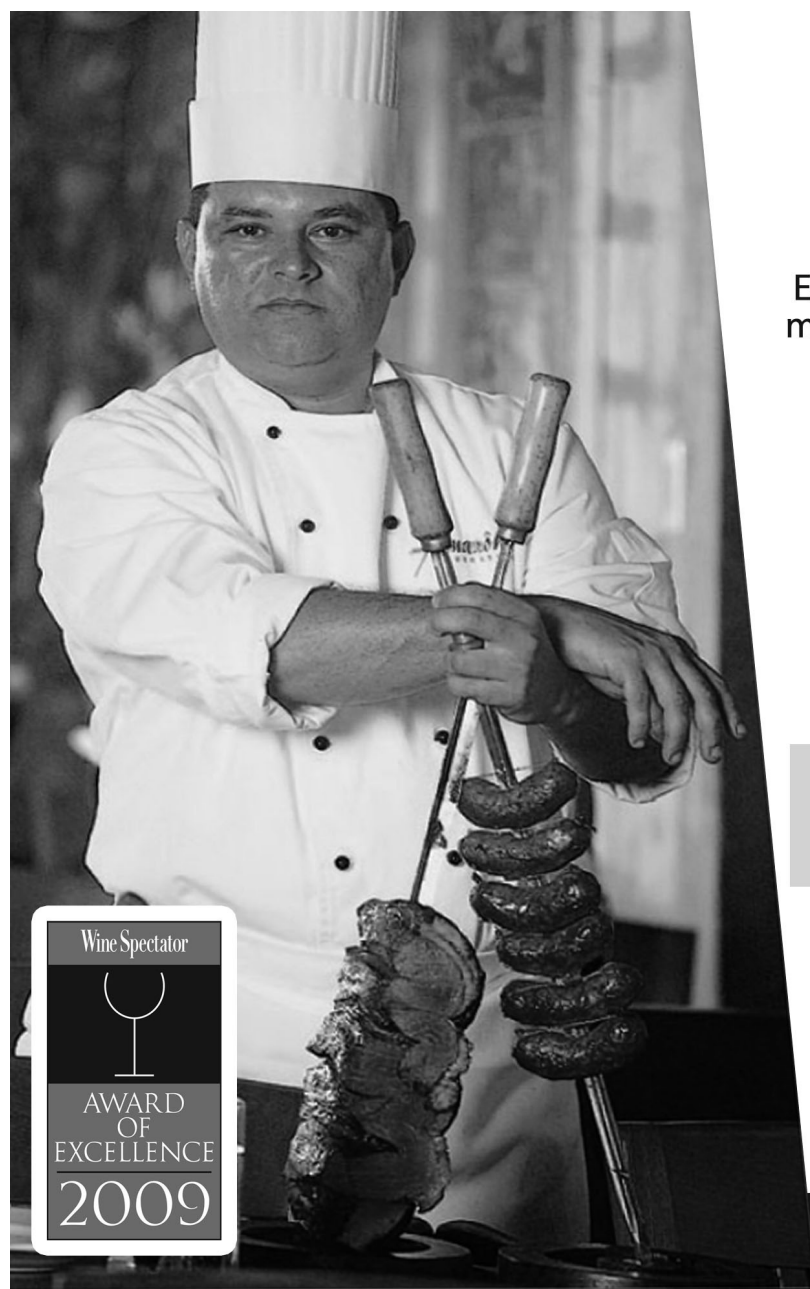


RadioShack’s Lance Armstrong of the U.S., second from left, rides during the second stage of the Vuelta a Murcia cycling tour between Calasparra and Caravaca de la Cruz, Murcia, Spain, Thursday, March 4, 2010.

Associated Press

Former teammate Alberto Contador won last year’s cycling classic when the two riders were at Astana, and the drop from favorite to front-runner was helping Armstrong, who finished third. “He tries to win but it’s not like in 2005 when it started to become an

obligation. There was a lot more distractions and negatives and now we’re trying to cut all the negative and to enjoy what we do,” Bruyneel said. “It feels like 2004-05. There’s super ambiance, everyone enjoys what they’re doing. It’s a little bit better than last year.” □



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NHL Roundup

Capitals upstage Miller return, beat Sabres



Washington Capitals' Jason Chimera celebrates his goal on Buffalo Sabres' Ryan Miller during the second period of the NHL hockey game in Buffalo, N.Y., Wednesday, March 3, 2010. The Capitals won 3-1.

Associated Press

BUFFALO, New York (AP) — The NHL-leading Washington Capitals upstaged U.S. Olympic goalie Ryan Miller's return to Buffalo by beating the slumping Sabres 3-1 on Wednesday.

Mike Green snapped a third-period tie, Jason Chimera scored and Boyd Gordon added an empty-net goal for Washington, while goalie Jose Theodore finished with 23 saves.

Hours after acquiring four players at the trade deadline, the Capitals ended a three-game losing streak in their first game following the Olympic break.

Miller made 37 saves in his first start since leading the United States to a silver medal and being selected the tournament MVP. He received a long pre-game standing ovation from the home fans.

Jochen Hecht scored for Buffalo, which has won only one of its past nine.

Canucks 6, Red Wings 3

In Detroit, U.S. Olympian Ryan Kesler scored twice, and gold-medal winning Canadian goalie Roberto Luongo made 28 saves as Vancouver downed Detroit.

Alex Burrows, Kyle Wellwood, Sami Salo and Mikael Samuelsson also scored for the Canucks.

Jason Williams, Henrik Zetterberg and Johan Franzen netted for Detroit.

Avalanche 4, Ducks 3

In Anaheim, California, Colorado snapped Anaheim's 11-game home winning streak. Matt Duchene scored the go-ahead goal with 11:51 to play and Peter Mueller scored in his Avalanche debut.

Chris Stewart and T.J. Galiardi also scored for Colorado.

Teemu Selanne scored his 598th goal, and Scott Niedermayer and Jason Blake also netted for the Ducks.

Wild 4, Flames 0

In Calgary, Canada, goalie Niklas

Backstrom made 29 saves for his second shutout of the season as Minnesota downed Calgary.

Mikko Koivu and Andrew Brunette each had a goal and an assist for Minnesota, while Kyle Brodziak and Martin Havlat also scored.

Blackhawks 5, Oilers 2

In Chicago, the hosts made it five wins in six games by defeating Edmonton.

Niklas Hjalmarsson, Dustin Byfuglien and Jonathan Toews all scored in the third period for Chicago.

Marian Hossa and Dave Bolland also netted for the Blackhawks, who outshot Edmonton 47-14.

Robert Nilsson and Shawn Horcoff scored for the Oilers, who have lost seven of their last eight.

Panthers 7, Flyers 4

In Sunrise, Florida, Florida ended a season-worse seven-game losing streak by dominating Philadelphia.

Michael Frolik scored twice and David Booth had a goal and three assists for the Panthers. Booth also fought with Flyers captain Mike Richards, whose hit in an October game caused a concussion that forced Booth to miss 42 games.

Bryan McCabe had three assists and had an empty-net goal, and Steven Reinprecht, Jason Garrison and Stephen Weiss added goals for the Panthers.

Daniel Briere, Jeff Carter, Ville Leino and Ryan Parent scored for the Flyers, who had their five-game winning streak snapped. Carter has scored in six consecutive games, tying three others for the longest streak this season.

In other NHL games it was, Washington 3, Buffalo 1; Florida 7, Philadelphia 4; Vancouver 6, Detroit 3; Chicago 5, Edmonton 2; Minnesota 4, Calgary 0; and Colorado 4, Anaheim 3. □

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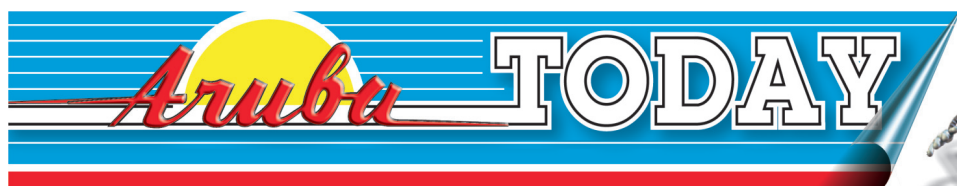


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HONDA

Continued from Page 12

Not bad, considering he was the other guy in a group with major champions Vijay Singh and Pádraig Harrington.

“You don’t like embarrassing yourself in front of a crowd,” Green said. “It can also help you, and I think that’s sort of what it did today, playing with those guys. You definitely feed off them a little bit I think, just how calm they keep themselves.”

It was a day of redemption for former Mississippi State players.

Connell — like Rocha, a former Bulldog — was a PGA Tour rookie in 2006, making the cut in four of 22 events. He never got back on the tour until this year, got a kickstart with an eagle on the par-5 third hole, and caught Green for the lead with a birdie at the par-3 17th.

Oliver Wilson and Camilo Villegas also were tied for second with Rocha at 4 under.

Singh, Bubba Watson and D.J. Trahan were all two shots back after shooting 67. If there was a surprise out of that group, it might have been Singh. Once the world’s No. 1 player, and still ranked No. 5 less than two years ago, Singh’s ranking has since fallen to No. 35.

“I know I’m not supposed to be there,” Singh said. “The bottom line is, you play well, it’s going to be OK. If you play well, the ranking is going to fix itself.”

Y.E. Yang had a lot to fix on Thursday.

Yang at the Honda has been an all-or-nothing proposition. He was last after 54 holes in 2008 and played the final round that year by himself in less than two hours, then was a surprise winner at PGA National last year — giving him a boost that he said helped carry him to a breakthrough year and the PGA Championship.

Maybe his title defense at Whistling Straits will go better than his defense at the Honda. Hard to imagine it going worse.

Yang started with a bogey, followed by a quintuple-bogey, leaving him 6 over after two holes and the downward spiral never got turned around. Yang wound up shooting 79, leaving him 14 shots off the pace. □

NBA Roundup

Nuggets crush divisional rival Thunder

DENVER (AP)—The Denver Nuggets took control with a big third quarter to crush the Oklahoma City Thunder 119-90 in Wednesday’s NBA action.

Carmelo Anthony outplayed Kevin Durant, scoring 30 points, and Nene added 20 points for the Nuggets, who moved 1-1/2 games clear atop the Northwest Division, and 3-1/2 ahead of the Thunder.

Durant, the NBA’s second-leading scorer, was held to 19 points after averaging 31 points in two previous games against the Nuggets this season.

James Harden also had 19 points for Oklahoma City.

Celtics 104, Bobcats 80

In Boston, Paul Pierce scored 27 points to lead the Boston to a comfortable win over Charlotte.

Boston’s Nate Robinson had 16 points, including three 3-pointers in a 90-second span bridging the first and second quarters to key a 16-0 run. The Celtics have easily beaten the Bobcats in all three clashes this season.

Tyrus Thomas had 15 points and 10 rebounds to lead Charlotte, losers of five of six.

In Los Angeles, Phoenix breezed to its second rout in six days against the Clippers, sweeping the four-game season series for the second straight year.

Amare Stoudemire had 30 points and 14 rebounds and Channing Frye scored 23 points, including four 3-pointers in the fourth quarter to help Phoenix build its margin to 29 points with 6:45 remaining. The Suns shot 56 percent.

Chris Kaman had 24 points and nine rebounds for the Clippers.

In New Orleans, Memphis notched a franchise-record fifth straight road win by edging New Orleans.

Mike Conley scored a season-high 26 points, including nine in the final quarter as the Grizzlies overcame a nine-point deficit. Conley missed two free throws with 11 seconds left that gave the



Denver Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony, center, goes up for a shot between Oklahoma City Thunder forwards Kevin Durant, left, and Jeff Green in the third quarter of the Nuggets’ 119-90 victory in an NBA basketball game in Denver on Wednesday, March 3, 2010.

Associated Press

Hornets a chance to tie it, but James Posey turned the ball over and Rudy Gay dunked as time expired.

Marcus Thornton scored 24 for New Orleans.

In Atlanta, Marvin Williams scored 21 points to power the Atlanta past struggling Philadelphia.

Jamal Crawford added 20 points for the Hawks, who have won five of six.

The 76ers, who have lost four in a row, were led by Lou Williams, who had 30 points. He hit his first 10 shots

and finished 11 for 15 from the field and 7 of 10 on free throws.

In Orlando, Florida, Dwight Howard had 28 points and 12 rebounds, and Orlando cruised to a victory over undermanned Golden State.

Rashard Lewis added 17 points to help the Magic win for the fifth time in six games and keep a tight grip on the Eastern Conference’s No. 2 playoff seed. They lead Atlanta by two games.

C.J. Watson had 18 points for an injury-riddled Warriors

team that dressed the NBA minimum eight players.

In other NBA games it was, Atlanta 112, Philadelphia 93; Orlando 117, Golden State 90; Boston 104, Charlotte 80; Cleveland 111, New Jersey 92; New York 128, Detroit 104; Milwaukee 100, Washington 87; Memphis 104, New Orleans 100; Dallas 112, Minnesota 109; Sacramento 84, Houston 81; Denver 119, Oklahoma City 90; Portland 102, Indiana 79; and Phoenix 127, L.A. Clippers 101. □

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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

NFL free agency begins Friday without salary cap

By BARRY WILNER

AP Football Writer

NEW YORK – The NFL has swallowed the poison pill.

When the league and the players association reached a new collective bargaining agreement in 2006, a clause called for eliminating the salary cap in 2010. Both sides assumed an uncapped season would be so distasteful that a new contract would be finalized long before the cap disappeared.

Even when the owners opted out of the CBA in 2008, little thought was given to an actual removal of the salary cap that generally has been beneficial for both owners and players. On Friday, pro football's salary cap dies. Free agency begins under a whole new set of rules, and no one is sure where it will lead — perhaps even to a work stoppage in 2011.

Yes, the most profitable and popular sport in America is entering territory even more uncharted than the end zone was for the St. Louis Rams last season.

"The situation we're walking into is certainly unknown for everyone," Tampa Bay Buccaneers general manager Mark Dominik says. "So no one can really look at the crystal ball and say here's what people are going to spend and here's what people aren't going to spend. It's all pure speculation."

Marc Ganis, president of Chicago-based consulting company Sports Corp. Ltd., thinks teams will be tightfisted.

"That's one of the possibilities in the uncapped season, will some teams be spending far below the current floor, especially teams that perform poorly on the field?" says Ganis. "Teams will have the option of spending the amount on their team that they think



This is an Oct. 28, 2009, file photo showing NFL Players Association Executive Director DeMaurice Smith, right, listening as NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington before the House Judiciary Committee hearing on legal issues relating to football head injuries. On Friday, March 5, 2010, pro football's salary cap dies. Free agency begins under a whole new set of rules, and no one is sure where it will lead — perhaps even to a work stoppage in 2011.

it is worth. A 4-12 team does not have the caliber players a consistently 12-4 team has.

"I expect the small and midsize market clubs are going to start to pay in this uncapped year based on what they can afford."

But sports agent Joe Linta, who represents Ravens quarterback Joe Flacco among others, is optimistic the pocketbooks will remain open. His thoughts echo those by many of his colleagues:

"The owners are all wealthy," Linta says, "and as much as they need and want to make money, the need to win is greater than the need to make money — they already have plenty. Their insatiable desire to win will override their greed to save and make money. So, yeah, they'll spend."

Some can spend more than others. But the crop of unrestricted free agents contains few difference makers and is inferior to the group of restricted free agents.

Under the CBA that expires next March, the top conference semifinalists from January's playoffs have extra restrictions in signing free agents. The

final four, for example, must lose an unrestricted free agent (UFA) before they can sign one.

That hamstring the Saints, Colts, Jets and Vikings.

"I think it is a penalty for sure," Jets coach Rex Ryan says. "Maybe you need a tight end or whatever it is and you don't have that ability to go out and get some of the top guys that might be available."

Many of those top guys aren't available at all. With no salary cap, it takes six years of service to become an unrestricted free agent, two more than in the past. Players with four and five seasons now are restricted, meaning the team losing them would earn compensation or would have the right to match offers from other clubs.

Among the 212 players who now are not totally free because of the uncapped season are All-Pro defensive end Elvis Dumervil of Denver, who led the league in sacks in 2009; San Diego linebacker Shawne Merriman and receiver Vincent Jackson; Miami running back Ronnie Brown; Dallas receiver Miles Austin; and Houston linebacker DeMeco Ryans.

While Dumervil, Austin and Ryans might be worth the heavy compensation they would cost, how many teams are willing to part with high draft picks and all the money it will take to sign such standouts?

"For us it's not changing," San Francisco 49ers GM Scot McCloughan. "We're going to go forward as if there is a cap. ... We're not going to be considered a big free agency team anyway. But we'll do what we need to do in free agency if we think it's a smart move."

Not that there won't be lots of bucks flying into players' bank accounts. Teams always want to procure as much talent as they can. If someone perceives defensive end Julius Peppers as the answer to their line issues, the money figures to be there — although certainly not on the scale of the \$20 million-plus Carolina would have needed to spend to make him a franchise player for the second straight year.

"When we talk about possible free agents, certainly Julius is one of the guys we talk about," Cleveland Browns president

Mike Holmgren says when asked if Peppers could have the kind of impact free-agent Reggie White had in Green Bay when Holmgren was the coach. "Then I have to put on my other hat because there are some financial ramifications there."

"As great a player as Julius is, I'd be reluctant to compare anybody to Reggie White. We did it, at the time we bonused him for I think \$8 million. Everybody thought we were nuts. It was numbers off the chart. Now think of that today."

Think of this today, as well: NFL teams must consider the ramifications of high spending in an uncapped 2010 if a salary cap returns in subsequent years. The money spent on Peppers or another quality UFA this year might be unlimited, but contract provisions beyond that could hinder staying under a salary cap in the future.

Lions coach Jim Schwartz sees more experienced, but possibly more worn-down players available in free agency this year. That, too, could curtail spending.

"Most of the ... unrestricted players are going to be players that are 29, 30, 31 years old. I think the biggest thing about that is, it places a lot more emphasis on getting the player right," says Schwartz, whose club needs all the talent it can get just to reach mediocrity. "You can get mileage out of a 29-year-old or a 30-year-old as long as you have a very specific role in mind for him and he fits your scheme and you feel good about that, because you're not going to have a whole lot of startup time with him."

Many team executives also believe April's draft carries more significance than usual because of the flux in free agency. □

With the arrival of its first aircraft this week

Aruba Airlines to obtain Airline Operator Certificate



ORANJESTAD - Aruba Airlines is serious in its attempt to spread its wings and start taking to the skies. The new company just welcomed its first aircraft this week, in its attempt to successfully complete the required processes before getting the coveted "AOC" Airline Operator Certificate. According to Aruba Airlines CEO Onno de Swart, the arrival of the 'Piper Chieftain PA 31-350,' a seven passenger aircraft that is now registered as N997SW, marks the official countdown for the inaugural flight of the company.

Aruba Airlines is a consortium of local investors, who for years poured energy and efforts to start up another local airline.

For many the demise of the local company Air Aruba was not justified and left the island totally dependent on foreign companies for its air transportation.

Air Aruba conducted international flights and was seen as many as a secure vehicle for the island's tourism industry.

In addition to having the required financial backup for the company, Aruba Airlines now needs to comply with flight and maintenance requirements before being able to get its AOC. This entails a demanding preparation period for its pilots, who now under closer scrutiny of the Aruba Civil Aviation Department will have to conduct their mandatory training flights,



before they are deemed ready to get the go-ahead to start conducting scheduled and charter flights. CEO de Swart is confident the company is able to comply with all the technical and financial requirements of the Civil Aviation in a record time.

In the meantime, Aruba Airlines adheres to extremely strict guidelines will become the second local airline established here. Tiara Air is another locally owned company. It focuses mainly on flights between the ABC (Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao) islands, as well as flights to Punto Fijo in Venezuela. Tiara Air recently introduced a scheduled flight to Colombia as well. Just like Tiara Air, Aruba Airlines will have to conduct regional flights before being able to apply for the permits to conduct longer, international flights.

De Swart acknowledges his company too will have to start small, but the goal

is definitely to go beyond chartered and regional flights. "Aruba Airlines wants to expand its global destinations rapidly.

However, we have to start small in order to develop

the company in the broader sense. When everything is in place, and the airline is officially in operation, then we will implement the steps to expand the company," he stated. □



Focusing On Quality Improvement Mixed With Some Island Fun

Marriott Hosts 3rd Philips Lighting Group for Competition In Aruba



PALM BEACH – The Philips Lighting Quality Improvement Competition (QIC) that is currently taking place at the Marriott Resort, invited the third out of four groups of Philips Lighting North America employees (Canada, Mexico and the United States) to Aruba for the past few days. Congratulations go out to Team ‘Reduction 50% Scrap in Coating’ from Monterrey, Mexico, who launched the winning project out of all improvements presented, earning a trip to Dublin, Ireland!

The last Philips Lighting group participating in this competition is arriving at the Aruba Marriott today, March 5th. All groups are offered the opportunity to explore the island such as culinary events including a welcome reception at the

Aruba Marriott Resort and lunch in Ruth’s Chris Steak House. The Philips QIC Award dinner on March 3rd was held at Papiamento Restaurant. Daytime activities to explore the island included a Scavenger Hunt, Jeep Safari, a sailing trip on a catamaran and Beach Olympic games at the Marriott.

Shown here are some snap shots from participants of the 3rd Philips Lighting group during the QIC team presentations in Marriott’s Ballroom, and teams enjoying a taste of Aruba’s diverse culinary offerings during lunch in Ruth’s Chris Steak House. Safe travels home to all Philips team members that are leaving Aruba today and bon bini to the last group arriving!

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411 guestrooms – the most spacious on the island – each with large, private balconies overlooking the sparkling waters of the Caribbean Sea. On property, seven restaurants and cafes provide fare from light to elegant, while the largest casino in Aruba, a 6,500 square-foot spa, free-form swimming pool with cascading waterfalls and high-energy health club offer entertaining diversions. Luxury hotel-within-a-hotel Tradewinds Club is the newest addition to this beachfront resort. Marriott and Renaissance Caribbean & Mexico Resorts is comprised of ten resorts in seven of the top tropical destinations in the Caribbean and Mexico – Aruba, Cancun, Curaçao, Grand Cayman, Puerto Vallarta, St. Kitts and St. Thomas. □



Together with 130 countries

Aruba participates at BIT – Milan 2010

A lively 30th edition closes with Bit confirmed as leading expo



ORANJESTAD – The International Tourism Exchange, BIT, celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. For several years Aruba has been participating in this huge event. The atmosphere was eager for economic recovery, as shown by the high quality of buyers present and by the attention paid to diversifying supply and demand. Workshops strengthened the B2B role of the show, while special areas engaged with travellers, as proved by the increase in numbers with respect to the previous edition.

Milan, 22nd February 2010 – The best of Italian and world tourism on offer. This was the impression received by all those who, for business or pleasure, between Thursday 18th and Sunday 21st February in the fieramilano expo centre at Rho, visited the 30th edition of Bit – the International Tourism Exchange. Over 5,000 participants took part in the fair, coming from 130 countries over five continents.

A quality confirmed by the particularly high level of the 848 buyers profiled, who came from all over the world to take part in the 4 workshops: Buy Italy, Bit Buy Club, Bit Buy World e Bit Itinera, whose success contributed to reinforce Bit as sector leader, for its ability in taking the growing diversification and segmentation of demand and

turning it into opportunities for operators. Bit's strengthened leading position is also confirmed by the numbers: a total of over 150 thousand people came through the gates. Worth noting, the figures for trade visitors, up 6% compared with the previous edition. "A fair must be a generator for business and, in this sense, is constantly evolving" - commented Enrico Pazzali,

Managing Director of Fiera Milano Spa. - nowadays Bit is a system that is active 24 hours a day for 365 days a year, to support operators in the integration of various instruments.

Within this context, the four days of the fair are still key, but their function has to evolve, with the emphasis on quality. This is what we set out to do, and have done, in this edition. And feedback from operators confirms that we should continue along these lines."

Great results also for Bit Sportland, the new Bit village dedicated to outdoor sports tourism, which interfaced successfully with the end user to communicate what was on offer here. And was also an entertainment stop for crowds of visitors.

See you at the 31st Bit, in the fieramilano expo centre in Rho, Thursday 17th to Sunday 20th February 2011. □



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VVD wants debt payments stopped

THE HAGUE--The liberal democratic VVD party wants the caretaker Balkenende cabinet to immediately cease debt reorganisation payments to the Netherlands Antilles.

Member of Dutch Parliament (MP) Frans Weekers, VVD's financial affairs spokesman, said on Wednesday that stopping the debt reorganisation would save some 700 million euros this year.

"The execution of the agreement with the Netherlands Antilles (the November 2006 Final Accord-Ed.) has suffered a delay, and this results in the entities on the islands taking longer to comply with the conditions that are tied to the debt reorganisation. That is why VVD wants an end to the debt reorganisation," said Weekers.

He made his statement the day after it was decided, in a meeting of the Second Dutch

Parliament Chamber's Permanent Committee for Antillean and Aruban Affairs NAAZ, that Parliament would handle the Antillean constitutional restructuring laws as planned.

A majority in Parliament wants to proceed with the laws to dismantle the Netherlands Antilles and establish the BES islands Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba as "public entities" and Curaçao and St. Maarten as autonomous countries within the Dutch Kingdom.

The VVD party has not objected to handling the laws for the BES islands, but is against a few of the Kingdom Consensus laws, including the one regulating the police organisations of the new entities.

The Party for Freedom PVV and Socialist Party (SP) want the entire Antilles dossier declared "controversial," meaning that the handling of legislation should be put on hold until a new Parliament has taken over. □

Venezuela's PDVSA eyes new hydrocarbons

CARACAS, Venezuela, March 4 (UPI) -- Petroleos de Venezuela, the state oil company, said it teamed with partners in Belarus to explore new areas of production in the Venezuelan plains.

Petroleos de Venezuela, or PDVSA, said it would work through a joint Belarusian venture, Bielovenezolana, to advance hydrocarbon production in parts of the country.

Experts from Belarus are recording drilling and surveying data in the Llanos region of Venezuelan to ensure the terms of their cooperative agreements with PDVSA are met, the Venezuelan company announced.

PDVSA lauded the employment benefits of the project, saying it would offer 600 direct and more than 2,000 indirect employment opportunities for the region.

More than 1,000 workers went on strike this week at the PDVSA refinery on the Dutch island of Curacao out of fears the company would abandon the facility.

The Curacao facility closed Monday following a shutdown. Venezuela is under a state of emergency as pervasive drought caused problems for the country's hydroelectric power grid.

Colombian gas exports to Venezuela collapsed in January, complicating the energy emergency. □

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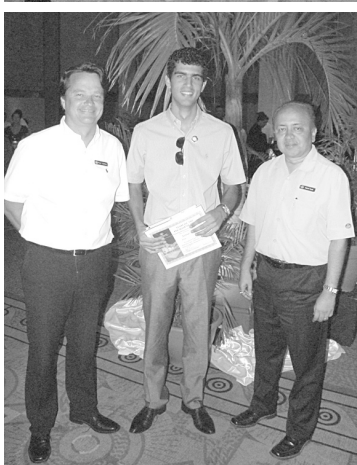
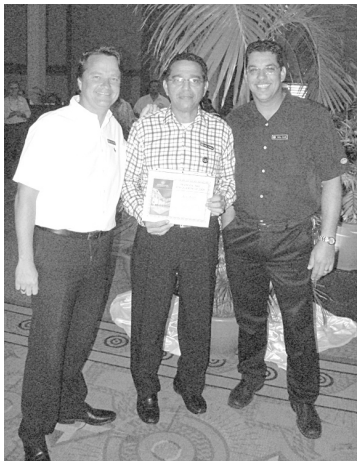
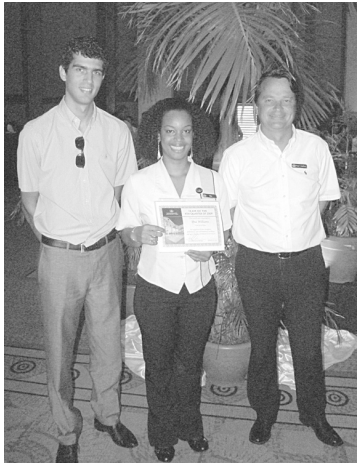
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Oranjestad – The honor of announcing the Team of the Fourth Quarter belonged to General Manager Paul Gielen, as he addressed a festive crowd during a cocktail party at the Renaissance Convention Center.

The winners for the Renaissance Marina Hotel and the Renaissance Ocean Suites was a team of four exceptional individuals, two employees, one for the Front of the House and the other for the Back of



the House, one Supervisor and one Manager. Those landing top honors as members of Team of the Quarter were eligible to become candidates for Team of the Year.

The winners, having outperformed all their peers were from the Heart of the House, Roberto Ramirez, General Engineer, Renaissance Private Island; Ifna Williams, Front



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Desk Clerk; Supervisor Alex Alders, Banquet Events and Front Desk Manager Selma de Roo. Many others were also nominated for the coveted spot on the top team, and deserved recognitions, said Gielen, among them Felix (Dito) Fingal, Delighted to Serve Agent; Felicia Donata Demi, Chef at the Ocean Suites; Julio Tromp, Food & Beverage Bartender Ocean Suites; Anushka v/d Linden, Food & Beverage Hostess Aquarius and Geordino Ruiz,

Food & Beverage Waiter, L.G. Smith's Steak & Chop House. Some outstanding supervisors included Jose Urena, Chef di Partie; Rosenda Lopez, Food & Beverage Supervisor L.G. Smith's Steak & Chop House; Zoyla Croeze, Retail Administrator; Primkoemar Manna, Food & Beverage Supervisor and Etelvina Ridderstaat, Housekeeping Supervisor.

Pictured here most-enjoyable party moments and the top team. □

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*** HUMAN HINTS ***

Simultaneous Infinite Time

Human Hints regulars will be familiar with the technique of mind projection through time, and the infinite power it offers each of us to change our future and our past. The more we understand a Human Being's relationship with Time, the more power we will wield in creating our own lives.

Time as we know it, is a construct of three dimensional expression. Time allows duality to exist. Time is the medium upon which Humans expresses themselves. Humans are artists, expressing themselves upon the canvas of Time.

Einstein proved that time, literally spacetime, is malleable, bendable. It can be stretched and transformed by an external force. As Humans, we each have the ability to transform spacetime through our thoughts and emotions. This is a huge responsibility and a great privilege, and the more we understand it, the more we can use it to our advantage.

Beyond three dimensions, time is more fluid and changeable than the linear, irreversible unfolding of moments we all know. As Humans, we know that a specific amount of measured time can seem like both a stagnant eternity and a quickly fleeting moment, depending on how you look at it. The classic rock legend Jackson Browne said it best. The years go by like so many so few.

The difference is in the way we look at any given period of time. Our thoughts about a specific moment changes how long it feels to us. Our thoughts exist beyond linear time, and they can bend and change Time itself.

Since thought is beyond time, our thoughts can access any and all points in Time, past and future. This makes all Time simultaneous from the reference point of our mind. We can think of any memory at any time, whether it happened 5 minutes or 50 years ago, the memory is instantaneous. As time progresses in three dimensions, our mind becomes aware of continually more linear moments. As soon

as we are aware of a moment, we can access it instantly, outside of time.

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF MARCH 4 - MARCH 10

*matinee: saturday - sunday | late show: friday & saturday

AT RENAISSANCE - ORANJESTAD

PG	ALICE IN WONDERLAND			
NEW	daily:	6:00	8:30	
	matinee: 1:00	3:30	late show: 11:00	
PG-13	THE LOVELY BONES			
	daily:	5:30	8:30	
	matinee:		late show: 11:30	
R	EDGE OF DARKNESS			
	daily:	4:30	7:00	9:30
	matinee: 2:00		late show: 12:00	
PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"			
	daily:			
	matinee: 12:55	3:15	late show:	
PG	VALENTINE'S DAY			
	daily:	6:30	9:00	
	matinee: 12:45	3:45	late show: 11:45	
R	THE WOLFMAN			
	daily:	6:00	8:45	
	matinee: 12:15	3:00	late show: 11:30	
PG-13	THE FOURTH KIND			
	daily:	4:15	6:45	9:15
	matinee: 1:30		late show: 11:45	

AT PASEO HERENCIA

R	SHUTTER ISLAND			NEW
	daily:	5:30	8:30	
	matinee:	2:30	late show: 11:30	
PG-13	DEAR JOHN			
	daily:	4:00	6:30	9:00
	matinee: 1:30		late show: 11:30	
PG	PERCY JACKSON & THE OLYMPIANS			
	daily:	5:30	8:15	
	matinee: 12:00	2:45	late show: 11:00	
PG	EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES			
	daily:	6:00	8:45	
	matinee: 1:00	3:30	late show: 11:15	
R	FROM PARIS WITH LOVE			
	daily:	4:00	6:15	8:30
	matinee: 1:45		late show: 11:00	
PG-13	AVATAR			
	daily:	4:45	8:00	
	matinee: 1:30		late show: 11:15	

Celebrate tonight with Live Music & Entertainment at Casa Tua Barcelona



ORANJESTAD - Casa Tua Barcelona's Flamenco Show is the spot to be tonight with Angela Croes TONIGHT and then again on Friday. On Thursday enjoy the amazing sounds Kavey Yarzagaray.

Enjoy your Paella and Sangria together with these fantastic live shows! The downtown atmosphere is cool and relaxed with its in- and outside seating.

The highlight at Casa Tua Barcelona is also the new lunch specials every weekday from Monday till Friday! A \$9.95 lunch special; Beef tenderloin



with a red wine sauce or choose the Grouper Fillet for \$11.95. Both dishes include a soft drink. Fresh Fish lovers can treat the palate to the Whole Red Snapper, served with Rice and a salad.

All days of the week we serve Cold and Hot tapas as appetizers or the delicious Iberian Ham Pata Negra which we import directly from Andalucía. As your main course you could choose our Paella, traditionally prepared on the spot by our chef! Combine this Spanish dish with our home-made sangria to complete your dinner.

Of course we saved the best for last as no one does an ending better than Casa Tua with their dreamy Tiramisu. If you're into something different we suggest tasting the Espresso Martini Cocktail as dessert, you won't be disappointed.

The best part about such a good ending is that it guarantees you'll be back for more...



Casa Tua Barcelona Downtown open from 11.30am to 10.30pm, Sunday from 5pm to 11pm tel. 588 5695. Casa Tua Palm Beach open from 5pm to 11pm, tel 586 8470

Adam Steinfeld live tonight!

Don't miss Magic & Comedy tonight at the Westin



STEINFELD: 'MAGIC LIVE!' Theater-of-illusions show... now at the WESTIN - Aruba, see it live! 9pm nightly NightMagic-Comedy- Master of illusions. PREPARE to Witness TOP-Class Illusions, Magic & Comedy on Stage. Adam Steinfeld's Magic Live!® show, at the WESTIN - Aruba... 'Sensational!', 'Amazingly Funny!'...the Hottest ticket in Town! A Must See" 'BEST MAGIC SHOW, I've seen in ages...and I hate Magic! - Carol Butz, Belair, Maryland.

'MagicLive!...is Hip-Comedy Entertainment, Adam is the ultimate Modern Magician' - Jacque Polak, CBS-TV. Steinfeld sophisticated card-sharp street magic, mixed with grand theater illusions is a visual feast...this will be the highlight of your vacation. -Al Blanchard, mystery novelist, Boston, MA.

Steinfeld's, comedy magician, likable on-stage personality, comic interactive-wit, and amazing magic, mixed with his dream-like theatre-of-

illusions, is a sensory overload of the imagination, along with his lovely dancers...a treat for the entire family.

SEE IT LIVE! On-Stage!

"It's obvious Adam's real passion is performing in front of a live audience, as his charisma and charm create an unforgettable show!" Steinfeld is a 'Master of Magic', he invents many of his own Las Vegas illusions that are designed in England, fabricated in Vegas, and travels with him on tour, in a explosion of amazing fun.

THE MUST-SEE SHOW - YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT! AROUND THE WORLD AND BACK, Adam Steinfeld: 'MAGIC LIVE!', from Monte Carlo, Hong Kong, Orlando, Miami Beach, Biloxi, Boston, San Juan, New York, Aruba to Vegas, it's the coolest show in town, taking up where Houdini left off." MAGIC-GRANDILLUSION - COMEDY



IF YOU GO

What: Magic Live! theater-of-illusions show
Where: Westin - Aruba, palm beach (high-rise area)
Who: starring, comedy illusionist, Adam Steinfeld
Time: 9:00 pm, theater opens at 8:30pm
Tickets: at the door
Price: \$19.95 under 15, \$29.5 adults
Group Sales: 561-1090
website: www.MagicLive.com
Blog: www.MagicOnTheBeach.com

T.H. Palm & Company raises money for the repair of the world



Palm Beach – One of the central themes discussed in the ancient Kabala is the requirement to repair the world, and make it a better place. Tikkun Olam, while an

under its Tikkun Olam program. At T.H. Palm & Company, Tikkun Olam is the ongoing effort to repair the world and do good, and donations are made quarterly, as funds



women, Hende Muher den Difficultad, the donation will help families in crisis find shelter. The Edmund Harms Foundation providing hospice-care for the terminally ill, was

thankful, as Juliska Harms took the check earmarked to help subsidize home-care for the dying. Two more island foundations received donations from T.H. Palm & Company via its parent



company Salamander Holdings NV, namely Telephone Pa Huventud, operating a telephone help-line for kids and teens and the local home for children Imeldahof, providing foster care to children ages 6-18 since 1954! Donations, says Managing Director Jodi Tobman, to Fundashon pa nos Comunidad, will be paid next week, as promised during the opening of The Coconut Trading Company at the Village on Palm Beach. Tobman thanked all those who contributed and expressed confidence that throughout the year the public will continue to be generous, helping the island's not-for-profit foundations, and giving back to the community. □



age-old concept, must be practiced every day of our life, in order to contribute to the bettering of the human condition. T.H. Palm & Company, a store dedicated to Fun Island Living, located at the Playa Linda Beach Resort promised a number of years ago, in 2008, to donate 2% of every sale to support one of Aruba's local charities,

are presented to island's charities. This week checks were delivered to Kibrahacha, a day-center for the elderly. The coordinators on duty received the funds with gratitude. At the Queen Wilhelmina Cancer Fund the volunteers accepted the check with great appreciation. At the foundation for abused



Tony Roma's is the island's headquarters for ribs!

Many restaurants claim to have the best ribs in the land, but only Tony Roma's world famous ribs continue to rack up taste awards from a variety of cities, regions, and countries across the globe. Tony Roma's Palm Beach brings this classic to Aruba.

Great ribs put Tony Roma's on the map, but the menu also features an array of flame-grilled favorites including steaks, seafood and chicken. The menu also serves up fresh salads, fantastic burgers and sandwiches, grilled fresh local fish, mouthwatering desserts and delicious appetizers - especially the popular, made-from-scratch Onion Loaf.

Today, there are more than 240 locations on five continents. From Seattle to Miami, Tokyo to Madrid, and Calgary to Aruba, Tony Roma's is creating an international incident with its flame-grilled fare. Discover why Tony Roma's is now an island dining institution!

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Chicken Tender Platter.....	\$13
Fish & Fries.....	\$13
Chicken Stack with Pasta Alfredo.....	\$14
Full Slab Original Baby Back Ribs.....	\$15
Jamaican Grilled Chicken.....	\$15

Fine & Affordable Dining at Pam Pam Restaurant

Meet Chef Ludwich Samson and his exquisite menu now unveiled!



Nestled in the quiet neighborhood of Boegoeroei, Perle d'Or apartment complex houses Dutch students and vacationers, as well as a cozy garden eatery, Pam Pam Restaurant & Bar. Aiming to attract a more diverse clientele, Pam Pam has recently adopted a more upscale dining concept. In order to pilot this new concept, rising local chef Ludwich Samson was brought on board, and in just two months on the job, he has

more than proven his worth.

Laid-back, refreshingly young, and ambitious, Ludwich began his career as a chef by enrolling in Aruba's hospitality and culinary arts school—the best decision he has ever made, he wholeheartedly claims. With ten years in the kitchen and three years as a chef, Ludwich has developed an impressive arsenal of cooking skills. He attributes the majority of his growth as a chef to his years

of working under his mentor, Vittorio Muscarllo, owner of Hostaria Da'Vittorio and one of the most highly respected chefs on Aruba.

In his two months with Pam Pam, Ludwich has entirely remodeled the kitchen to make it more efficient. He has also created a whole new menu featuring particularly unique dishes in order to distinguish Pam Pam from the endless number of restaurants along Aruba's hotel strip. While the menu still offers Dutch snacks and typical Dutch platters like sate to appease the many Dutch interns residing at Perle d'Or, the rest of the menu offers upscale fusion cuisine. Lemon grass and chillies give several seafood dishes a Thai flair; homemade ravioli and beef carpaccio salute Italy; crustacean ceviche adds a Peruvian element; and Indonesian spices add zest to a handful of casual main dishes.

Ludwich also craftily adds little unexpected twists to some classic dishes, elevating the uniqueness of his menu. One of his personal favorites is his porcini-crusted filet mignon served with a thyme red-wine reduction. He also delights in the fact that most diners have a hard time figuring out the sweet and spicy deliciousness of his signature crustacean platter. Other interesting interpretations include lump-crab lollipops, chicken cordon blue unorthodoxly stuffed with ricotta and bacon, and for dessert, tiramisu that promises an untraditional layer of decadent Bailey's chocolate mousse.

Needless to say, Ludwich is creative in the kitchen and works extremely hard, currently putting in 12 to 16 hours a day, seven days a week; but he insists that this is not what makes a good chef good. "I simply love what



I do for a living," confides Ludwich, and this is what guarantees success in the kitchen and contented diners. Of course, being a chef can be downright stressful, but Ludwich thrives on the rush of adrenaline on busy nights. And when he peers out of the kitchen and sees a restaurant full of people enjoying their meals, he experiences immense satisfaction. For reservations call: 5877710 or 7483848, or visit us at www.pampamaruba.com. □

Curacao refinery may stay shut for weeks –sources



By Joshua Schneyer and Irasi Jimenez

WILLEMSTAD - The Isla refinery run by Venezuelan state oil company PDVSA on the Caribbean island of Curacao is likely to remain mostly or completely shut down for weeks, plant and supplier sources said on Thursday.

They told Reuters that two of three air compressors supplied by local utility company CUOC have failed and must be repaired or replaced.

The unexpected shut-down, coupled with a worker strike at the plant this week, is the latest snag to hit PDVSA's 3 million barrel-per-day worldwide refinery network.

The plant was processing around 230,000 barrels a day of crude -- below its capacity of 320,000 -- before it shut down on Monday due to power supply and air compression problems.

The plant cannot be restarted immediately because CUOC's remaining compressor cannot power it alone, the sources said.

"This could take some time to fix," said a manager at the refinery, who requested anonymity.

The refinery also produces up to 100,000 barrels-per-day of gasoline and other light fuels for the local market and other parts of the Caribbean. The prolonged shutdown could force the region to boost imports of fuel from other markets, such as the United States and Venezuela, the sources said.

The Curacao installations are strategic for PDVSA, comprising more than 10 percent of the oil giant's global crude processing capacity. An adjacent crude oil tank depot, with capacity to store up to 16 million barrels of crude, is included in PDVSA's lease of Isla.

The depot, known as Curacao Oil Terminal (COT), has recently emerged as a key staging point for Venezuela's growing crude oil exports to China. Sources familiar with COT told Reuters PDVSA has been dispatching at least one Very Large Crude Carrier (VLCC) per month to China. VLCCs can hold around 2



million barrels of crude.

LABOR PROBLEMS

PDVSA's 1.2 million barrel-per-day refining capacity in Venezuela has been dogged in recent years by chronic outages, which most analysts pin on poor maintenance.

Isla has suffered from power, compressed air and steam supply problems. Some refinery units were closed for months last year.

Isla's catalytic cracker, key to churning out light fuel, may require 2-4 weeks to bring back online even after the air compressors are repaired, one source said.

A strike at the plant this week has left residents of Curacao,

with a population of 147,000, queuing for fuel at the few filling stations on the island that still have supplies.

Although the refinery has gasoline supplies on hand, workers have blocked all but a few fuel trucks from leaving the plant.

In the last week, Venezuela's oil minister has twice threatened to pull PDVSA out of the refinery, citing accusations by President Hugo Chavez that U.S. planes based on Curacao had spied on his government. Isla's 1,000 workers have expressed concern that PDVSA plans to withdraw from Curacao, but have agreed to return to work once the air compressors are repaired, the refinery's workers union said.



Some answers needed about the BTA process

With the immigration raids already in progress and the Brooks Tower Accord applications process still not completed, can someone please answer some questions?

This process is turning out to be a whole mess and robbery in the face of God. It is being circulated that the US\$900 that was paid along with the application is no longer valid after two months. Is this correct or not?

There are lots of people who are still waiting for calls with regard to the completion of the Brooks Tower Accord applications process. This island is referred to as "The Friendly Island" but it certainly does not apply to the immigration process. Where is the fellowship among the Caribbean people?

There is good and bad in every country. But here, even the good receives bad treatment for no apparent reason. At the immigration office, it seems as though the staff really prefers a full crowd to be there on a daily basis because if this were not true, they would have provided accurate information to the clients at the start of the process, instead of having people waste hours waiting in line and having to return again and again with additional documents or documents that were previously provided to them.

The BTA process is not like this in Curaçao. Why is St. Maarten being so difficult with this process?

On another point is that the government should also address the issue of employers who take money from their employees to process working permits and never process them. These poor people are the ones to suffer. The funny thing about this situation is that after these people get deported, the jobs that are left opened are the types that the locals do not want to fill.

So what will happen to businesses that depend on construction workers, security guards, housekeepers, and gardeners etc.? There are hardworking "illegals" that are facing that plight because of the fact that their employers do not want to "step up to the plate." Then who is really to blame here?

Anyway, there are too many rumours going around with regard to the BTA. Do different rules apply to applicants that have children going to school? And is the processing fee of US\$900 and the application no longer valid after two months? Can an official statement be made with regard to the BTA, once and for all?

Jamie Payne

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De Weever calls for Xavier's resignation

~ DP says CFT comments slap in island's face ~

PHILIPSBURG--Opposition Democratic Party (DP) member Leroy de Weever has called for Finance Commissioner Xavier Blackman to resign because of what he considers as the commissioner's failure to produce a proper budget for 2010.

De Weever told The Daily Herald Wednesday Blackman was "incompetent" at his job and he called on Leader of Government Commissioner William Marlin to remedy the situation before the island and people were further hampered.

"I don't think he has the level of what is needed at this time for St. Maarten if we cannot produce a budget," De Weever said.

De Weever's call came a day after the Committee for Financial Supervision CFT announced that it would inform the Kingdom Council of Ministers that St. Maarten has no 2010 budget to be approved by CFT or the Island Council.

Meanwhile, DP leader Island Councilwoman Sarah Wescot-Williams stated earlier Wednesday that the CFT's move to inform the Kingdom Council of Ministers that the island has no budget is a "hard slap in the face of government, but this is no reason to rejoice, because it reaches the Island Council and people."

CFT said Tuesday it also would advise the Council of Ministers to issue a decree instructing the Executive Council of St. Maarten to have an approved budget that complies with all norms and regulations by the third week of March.

CFT has advised the

Executive Council to re-visit its 2010 budget and present a balanced budget that doesn't take into account the cost of the dismantling process. This "new" budget would still have to be presented to CFT and to pass through the Central Committee again.

Not having a budget is a very big deal, because it affects how the island is perceived in its quest to become a country within the kingdom, De Weever said. "I don't think the people of St. Maarten should be subjected to this."

"This island is at a juncture where we can't pussyfoot any more. ...

The consequences for St. Maarten are going to be too big for us to maintain this type of situation," he said.

Blackman's resignation would have no political fallout for the National Alliance (NA)/Heyligher coalition government because he is a "professional" commissioner and not a member of the Island Council. His resignation would not tip the balance of power in the Island Council, De Weever pointed out.

Wescot-Williams called on Wednesday for government and opposition to close ranks in the Island Council to secure country status for St. Maarten. Issues such as the budget, Immigration, and the National Health Insurance are "much larger."

The present government appears to be insufficiently aware of the processes and procedures of government operations, she added. Specifically on the budget, Wescot-Williams said government seemed to be ignoring the advice to correct its shortcomings or altogether ignoring whatever advice was given.

Government can still operate on the 2009 budget in the absence of one for 2010, but only to maintain its services, not to make any capital investment, DP Island Councilwoman Maria Buncamper-Molanus added.

DP Island Councilman and former Finance Commissioner Roy Marlinsaid in the party press conference that government needed to "swallow some pride and save St. Maarten from this embarrassment [of the budget]."

Marlin said all the present government had to do to improve the island's liquidity and help in balancing the budget was to complete the refinancing of several pre-financed projects that already had CFT approval. The interest would have become minor, giving government more liquidity.

The debt to the General Pension Fund APNA was also further worked out. Government owes APNA some NAf. 60 million and had been paying back NAf. 500,000 every month



together with its regular premium. Marlin explained that government simply had to complete its report on what was owing, have this verified by an accountant and submit this reminder for debt relief due to St. Maarten from the Dutch Government. □



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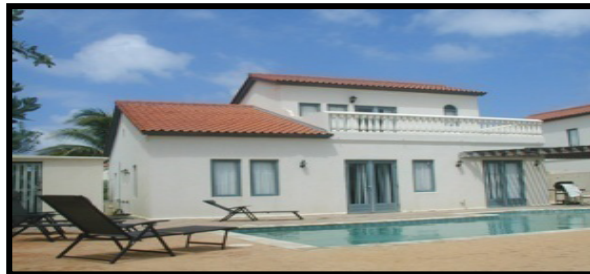
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En Costa Rica

Hillary Clinton exhorta a reformas en Latinoamerica



La secretaria de estado de Estados Unidos Hillary Rodham Clinton habló con estudiantes en Sao Paulo, Brasil, el miércoles 3 de marzo de 2010. Clinton estuvo en San José de Costa Rica el jueves 4 de marzo de 2010 y se reunió con autoridades de 15 países de América Latina para hablar de reformas democráticas y sociales. (Foto AP/Andre Penner)

Argentina: sismo de 5,1 en provincia de Mendoza

BUENOS AIRES (AP) - Un sismo de magnitud 5,1 se registró el jueves en la cordillerana provincia de Mendoza, sin que se produjeran víctimas ni daños materiales.

El Servicio Geofísico de Estados Unidos informó que el temblor se registró a las 7.53 y con un epicentro ubicado a unos 800 kilómetros al oeste de la capital argentina y con una profundidad de 10,7 kilómetros.

El epicentro está situado a unos 170 kilómetros al este de la ciudad chilena de Talca. Expertos en terremotos dijeron al canal Todo Noticias que es posible que este temblor sea una consecuencia del sismo ocurrido en Chile y señalaron que las réplicas continuarán por unos tres a cuatro meses más. □

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (AP) - La secretaria de estado de Estados Unidos Hillary Rodham Clinton está promoviendo reformas democráticas y sociales en América Latina, donde varias naciones tienen historias políticas muy conflictivas y desempeño democrático irregular.

En una reunión el jueves con altas autoridades de 15 países de América Central y del Sur, además de Canadá, Clinton preveía presionar a las naciones en el hemisferio occidental para reanudar las plenas relaciones con Honduras. Una elección en noviembre terminó con la crisis política resultante de un golpe de estado cinco meses antes.

Funcionarios de Estados Unidos también dijeron que Clinton exhortará a renovar esfuerzos para combatir el crimen y la pobreza, así como promover los derechos de las mujeres, el desarrollo económico y el estado de derecho.

Algunos en América Latina se han quejado de que el gobierno del presidente Barack Obama no ha cumplido con las grandes de una presencia mayor de Estados Unidos en la región. Durante

su viaje, Clinton ha defendido las acciones de Washington y ha emprendido contra los críticos de sus políticas.

“Creo que un número de líderes en el hemisferio que han criticado a Estados Unidos ya no están encontrando muchos seguidores, y pienso que eso muestra que la forma en que estamos manejando nuestra participación es bien recibida”, dijo Clinton a los reporteros esta semana.

Aunque no dijo a cuáles líderes se refería, el presidente venezolano Hugo Chávez y el boliviano Evo Morales han sido particularmente directos en sus comentarios contra Estados Unidos.

Ni Venezuela ni Bolivia tuvieron representación alguna en la reunión, parte de la iniciativa “Senderos a la Prosperidad” iniciada por el ex presidente George W. Bush y expandida por la administración Obama.

Costa Rica es la penúltima escala de la gira de Clinton por seis países de la región. Ya estuvo en Uruguay, Argentina, Chile y Brasil, y se la aguarda el viernes en Guatemala. □

Revelan aparente plan para atentar contra magistrados colombianos

BOGOTÁ (AP) - La Corte Suprema de Justicia (CSJ) denunció el jueves un supuesto plan para atentar contra varios magistrados de la Sala Penal de ese organismo.

La oficina de prensa de la CSJ dijo en un comunicado que el fiscal general Guillermo Mendoza se encontraba reunido con algunos integrantes de la Corte para tratar “el asunto de amenazas contra los magistrados”, sin hacer más precisiones.

Sin embargo, al término

del encuentro Mendoza no entregó detalles de lo que habló con los magistrados y luego, el ministro de Defensa Gabriel Silva explicó a periodistas que “existía la presencia de unos personajes que venían del departamento de Córdoba y que fueron ubicados en una zona cercana a la residencia de un magistrado”.

Silva advirtió que no tenía información de que el objetivo de los “personajes... ubicados” fuera atentar

contra el magistrado. De todos modos manifestó que la seguridad de todos los integrantes de la Corte fue reforzada.

Según versiones difundidas el jueves por el diario El Tiempo y la emisora Caracol, dos hombres fueron detenidos por su aparente implicación en las amenazas, que estarían dirigidas contra los magistrados Augusto Ibáñez, presidente de la Corte hasta hace un mes, Javier Zapata y Jorge Luis Quintero. □

España suaviza las acusaciones a Venezuela en relación con ETA

MADRID (Reuters) - España suavizó el jueves las acusaciones de vínculos entre el Gobierno de Venezuela y el grupo separatista vasco ETA y los rebeldes colombianos de las FARC, en un intento por poner los intereses económicos de los países por delante de un potencial enfrentamiento político.

España provocó la ira del presidente venezolano, Hugo Chávez, después de pedir explicaciones por las acusaciones de un juez español que dijo que el país latinoamericano había ayudado a ETA y a las guerrillas

colombianas de las FARC a planear posibles atentados en suelo español.

No obstante, el ministro de Exteriores, Miguel Angel Moratinos, llamó a Chávez por teléfono tras las acusaciones del magistrado para atenuar el incidente.

“Lo que hice fue ponerme en contacto con las autoridades venezolanas, con el presidente Chávez (...) a quienes pedí aclaración, información sobre esa situación”, dijo el jueves Miguel Angel Moratinos a los periodistas. □

Don't drink & DRIVE

Suspenden búsqueda sobrevivientes por sismo en Chile

Reconstruir Chile tras sismo durará 3-4 años: Bachelet

CONSTITUCION, Chile (Reuters) - Rescatistas abandonaron el jueves la búsqueda de sobrevivientes en algunas zonas del centro y el sur de Chile devastadas por el sismo y los tsunamis, mientras el mar comenzaba a devolver decenas de cadáveres tragados por el mar.

La recuperación de desaparecidos parece destinada a elevar la cifra oficial de 802 muertos causados por el terremoto de magnitud 8,8 que estremeció a Chile en la madrugada del sábado y los tsunamis posteriores que borraron pueblos del mapa.

Aterrorizados por las réplicas, residentes en la costa del Pacífico pasaron la noche acampando en cerros por temor a que olas gigantes volvieran a barrer lo poco que queda en pie en puertos y caletas.

La presidenta chilena, Michelle Bachelet, dijo que su país necesitará probablemente ayuda financiera internacional para reconstruir las zonas devastadas.

La reconstrucción demorará “prácticamente todo el Gobierno próximo o por lo menos tres años del Gobierno próximo”, dijo la presidenta socialista, que la semana próxima entregara el poder a una administración de derecha.

El mandatario electo Sebastián Piñera respondió designando el jueves a ingenieros civiles



La presidenta de Chile Michelle Bachelet se dirige a la prensa, en Santiago. Marzo 2 2010. La presidenta chilena, Michelle Bachelet, estimó el jueves que la reconstrucción del país demorará al menos de 3 a 4 años tras el poderoso terremoto y una serie de tsunamis que sacudieron al país el sábado, dejando hasta ahora más de 800 muertos y millonarios daños. REUTERS/Sebastian Escobar

como intendentes de las regiones golpeadas por la tragedia.

“Nuestro futuro Gobierno no va a ser el Gobierno del terremoto, va a ser el Gobierno de la reconstrucción”, dijo Piñera, un multimillonario empresario, quien admitió que deberá ajustar su programa prometido durante su campaña presidencial.

Aunque la minería, el corazón de la economía chilena, retomó su actividad, infraestructuras clave como refinerías, plantas siderúrgicas y de celulosa, embotelladoras, fábricas de alimentos y caminos resultaron

dañados.

“Este es un terremoto devastador (...) creo que todavía no tenemos esa dimensión exacta del daño en algunas partes”, dijo Bachelet.

En una pequeña señal de normalidad, los vuelos comenzaron a despegar el jueves con mayor regularidad desde la aeropuerto de Santiago, donde fue improvisada una sala de embarque en tiendas de campaña por daños en la terminal.

También el mercado bursátil subía en la jornada por primera vez desde que el lunes

abrió con una fuerte baja tras el potente sismo del fin de semana.

SUSPENDEN BUSQUEDA DE SOBREVIVIENTES

En Constitución, una maltrecha zona industrial costera 360 kilómetros al sur de Santiago, rescatistas con perros llegados de todo

Chile buscaban cadáveres que luego apilarán en una morgue improvisada en un gimnasio.

“Hoy y a se estas sólo en las tareas de búsqueda de cadáveres. Es muy poco probable encontrar sobrevivientes”, afirmó a Reuters Humberto Silva, jefe de operaciones de bomberos de la norteña localidad de Coquimbo.

Los socorristas temían que hubieran perecido cientos de personas sorprendidas por las olas mientras acampaban en una isla frente a Constitución. Pueblos costeros, caletas y puertos fueron arrasados por las olas de hasta 15 metros de altura provocadas por el sismo. En algunas áreas, el agua entró más de dos kilómetros dentro del continente.

El jueves el mar comenzó a devolver cuerpos en las playas de arenas negras de la zona, dijo un testigo de Reuters. La Armada despachó buzos tácticos para recogerlos.

La situación de los sobrevivientes a quienes el desastre dejó sólo con lo puesto empeoró con temperaturas bajas del fin del verano. Muchos chilenos usaban las redes sociales como Facebook para tratar de ubicar a sus familiares. □

Perú:

Nuevo desborde de río en Cusco mata a siete

LIMA (AP) - Seis mujeres y un hombre que trabajaban con un grupo de limpieza en el cauce de un río fueron arrastrados y murieron por una crecida en el sur del país, una región en donde se han registrado persistentes lluvias, informó el jueves la policía.

Según el reporte oficial, cuadrillas trabajaban la tarde el miércoles en la limpieza del cauce del río Quitamayo cuando fueron sorprendidos por una crecida. La mayoría logró ponerse a salvo pero siete de ellos fueron arrastrados por las aguas en la localidad de Pisac, a unos 590

kilómetros al sudeste de Lima.

Al menos seis personas murieron el lunes en la misma región tras un deslizamiento y desborde del río Quesermayo cerca de Pisac.

Cusco ha sido azotada por intensas y persistentes lluvias desde enero, cuando se produjo la destrucción de la vía férrea que conduce a la ciudadela de Machu Picchu como consecuencia de los desbordes de ríos y aludes. El acceso al sitio arqueológico sigue cerrado porque no han terminado de reparar los daños ocasionados. □

Uruguay:

Mujica planea viajes Chile, Bolivia, Brasil y Venezuela

MONTEVIDEO (AP) - El presidente de Uruguay José Mujica tiene en agenda viajar a la asunción de Sebastián Piñera como presidente de Chile el 11 de marzo, aunque la decisión final depende de lo que decida el gobierno chileno que está ocupado enfrentando las consecuencias del terremoto del sábado.

El canciller Luis Almagro, informó el jueves a la prensa que los planes de Mujica incluyen después de estar en Chile, viajar al día siguiente a Bolivia para reunirse con el presidente Evo Morales, el 29 de marzo ir a Brasil para un encuentro con el mandatario Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva y el día siguiente viajará a Venezuela donde se entrevistará con Hugo Chávez.

Morales, Lula y Chávez estuvieron en la asunción de Mujica; la presidenta de Chile Michelle Bachelet canceló su participación por el terremoto ocurrido dos días antes. □

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Jim Hitte is a dueling piano bar veteran who has also performed for nightclubs and corporate and private party functions for many years — both as a solo entertainer and with his bands. Jim was the lead pianist and musical director at Slick Willie's in Providence, one of the USA's first dueling piano bars. He was also a regular at Boston's Jake Ivory's.

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